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Comoros premier forms new government

MORONI (R) — The prime minister and acting president of the Comoros has formed a new government, a month after a failed coup led by veteran French mercenary Bob Denard. Mohammed Cabi Al Yachrouout named the 15-person government, the second since the coup was reversed by French military intervention, on Tuesday evening. The new "government of national unity and transition" includes four ministers from parties that supported the coup by Mr. Denard and some 30 mercenaries, whose action led to the removal and exile of President Said Mohammed Djohar. They included Rural Development, Fishing and Environment Minister Ansoudine Abdullah and his colleague from the Udzima Party, Minister of Planning, Industry and Cottage Industries Said Ben Oussin. The other ministers from a party that backed the coup are Information, Post and Telecommunications Minister Mohammed Abdou and Islamic Affairs and Employment Minister Delifou Omar. Both are members of the Comoros National Union for Democracy Party. After his release by Mr. Denard, Mr. Djohar was taken from Comoros to the French Indian ocean island of Reunion by French troops.

Jordan Times

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Qatar slams U.S. Congress vote

DUBAI (R) — Qatar on Wednesday described last week's vote by the U.S. Congress to move the American embassy to Jerusalem as a negative resolution that could gravely harm peace efforts, the Qatari News Agency said. It said the Qatari cabinet, meeting under the emir, Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, "has expressed its denunciation of the attitude of the U.S. Congress on moving the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. It is a negative resolution that will gravely harm the efforts to complete the Middle East peace process and which contradicts U.N. resolutions on the status of Jerusalem," the cabinet said.

Peace deals cost Israel \$1b — report

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel has budgeted nearly \$1 billion through 1998 for carrying out its peace agreements with the Palestinians and Jordan, an Israeli newspaper said Wednesday. The figures were contained in the proposed 1996 state budget which was approved by parliament in a first reading Wednesday. According to the Haaretz daily, Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho in 1994 cost \$356 million. The next pullback from West Bank towns and villages, slated for later this year, is to cost \$533 million. Included in that sum is the cost of paving bypass roads for Jewish settlers. The finance ministry has dismissed estimates by senior army officials who said last week the West Bank pullback could cost as much as \$1 billion. Implementation of the peace agreement with Jordan, including the construction of new border crossings, cost \$70 million.

Kuwait, S. Arabia 'not to deal with Saddam'

KUWAIT (AP) — The emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, and Saudi Arabia's King Fahd have agreed in talks this week they would continue to have nothing to do with Saddam Hussein, Al Qabas newspaper reported Wednesday. The independent daily said King Fahd and Sheikh Jaber, who returned home Tuesday after a two-day visit to Saudi Arabia, still viewed the Iraqi president as a danger to the security and stability of the region. The Kuwaiti emir's visit to Saudi Arabia followed a call last month by the United Arab Emirates for the lifting of U.N. sanctions imposed on Iraq for its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Kuwait rejected the call, saying lifting the sanctions was a matter only for the United Nations to decide. Saudi Arabia is known to share Kuwait's view on the issue. Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are grouped in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — a regional alliance of which Qatar, Oman and Bahrain are also members. Qatar was the only GCC member to publicly welcome the call. Egypt and Sudan also welcomed it.

8 expelled families enter Gaza

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel has allowed eight Palestinian families expelled from Libya to enter the Gaza Strip, army radio reported. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin allowed their entrance as a humanitarian gesture in answer to a direct plea from Yasser Arafat, the report said. The families have been sitting on the border between Egypt and the Gaza Strip for weeks after Libya deported over a thousand Palestinians from its territory since September, hundreds of whom were stranded for weeks on the Egyptian border. Several hundred Palestinians expelled from Libya crossed into the autonomous West Bank town of Jericho from Jordan last month, but they all held valid permits to live in the Gaza Strip.

King: Jordan will serve as model for democracy, political pluralism

MENA summit reflects public-private sector interaction

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein has reiterated his belief that Jordan would serve as a model of democracy, political pluralism and respect for human rights and that all in the Middle East region would feel the fruits of peace. The King, in an interview with Cable News Network (CNN) broadcast on Jordan Television Wednesday evening, also said that the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) summit which concluded in Amman on Tuesday, was the fruit of interaction between the private sector and government. The King also reiterated his call for a dialogue between the three main elements of the Iraqi society aimed at solving the country's problem and putting an end to the suffering of the Iraqi people. Following is the King's interview with CNN in a question and answer form:

QUESTION: If we could begin by looking at Jordan's changing role within the region and perhaps Jordan's changing role with Iraq, if you could give us your thoughts on where you believe Iraq's future lies or should lie?

ANSWER: With regard to Iraq I believe it is a very important country in this region. It is a country with a very rich heritage; it is a country where pluralism could be a fact of life; it is a country where democracy is missing; it is a country where respect for human rights is unfortunately not there. I believe that the future is important for Iraq in the sense that we hope that it will be an important, vital part of this area. And I believe that the only way to achieve that is to encourage, as rapidly as possible, a meeting and a dialogue between all the components that make up Iraq. This will, I believe help

very much indeed in bringing about the change for the better and save Iraq from what it is suffering right now. Q: But there was quite a change over the past number of years, and Jordan is now at the forefront of the peace process taking a very active role. How has this come about do you believe, and what does it mean for the future of your country? A: I believe that Jordan has found that it has a message, it has something to say, it has something to contribute in this region. And Jordan is a democracy which we hope will offer an example to others in the region. It is a pluralistic society, and we hope that our respect for human rights will also be an example to others. We hope that we can do whatever is possible to stress the importance of the individual in shaping responsibly the future of his country wherever he is. As far as the peace

France argues for nuclear weapons

THE HAGUE (R) — France urged the International Court of Justice on Wednesday to reject a United Nations request for advice on the legality of nuclear weapons. A French foreign ministry legal official argued that the request was inappropriate and that a nuclear deterrent was key to national self-defence. The World Health Organisation (WHO) and the U.N. General Assembly have asked the court, the U.N.'s main judicial body, to give an historic, though non-binding, pronouncement on whether international law permits the threat or use of nuclear weapons. On the second day of public hearings at the court, France argued that the request was "manifestly inadmissible" and "disturbing" and should be rejected. Marc de Brichambaut, foreign ministry legal affairs director, insisted that individual nations should be allowed to determine their own defence policies, particularly in the case of self-defence. "I would warn the court against a formula which ... would imply an assessment of a defence policy based on deterrence," he told the 14 judges.

PLO, Hamas say Shaqqi killing destroyed truce bid

GAZA (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials and rival Hamas leaders said on Wednesday the killing of Islamic Jihad chief Fathi Shaqqi in Malta harms Palestinian National Authority (PNA) contacts with headline groups to end attacks against Israel. Shaqqi, 43, was gunned down in Malta on Oct. 26. Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip accused Israel of the assassination and vowed to avenge his death. "What happened in Malta destroys the meetings which are taking place between us and Hamas and Islamic Jihad," Mohammad Dahlan told Israeli Radio. "It creates a barrier of mistrust in the (PNA's) promises to these organisations that we will live in stability without interventions from the Israeli side." PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat has been trying to persuade Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, to abandon armed attacks against Israel's threatening the PLO's peace deal with Israel. Hamas spokesman Mahmoud Al Zahhar told Reuters: "It puts a lot of difficulties in front of dialogue between any Palestinian faction and the (PNA)." He said that the main demand by the PNA in the



His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday receives Bahraini Trade Minister Sheikh Saleh Al Saleh at the Royal Court (Petra photo)

King receives Bahraini minister

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein met at the Royal Court on Wednesday, with Sheikh Saleh Al Saleh, Bahrain's minister of trade, who conveyed to the King greetings from Bahraini ruler Sheikh Isa Ben Salman Al Khalifa and congratulations on the success of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) summit. During the meeting, the two sides reviewed topics discussed at the conference as well as regional and international issues of common concern. The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasem and His Royal Highness Prince Talal Ben Mohammad, the King's military secretary.

Rival Balkan leaders in 'last-chance' peace talks

DAYTON (Agencies) — Balkan rivals were meeting on Wednesday for what are being hailed as last-chance talks to end four years of bloody war and rearrange Yugoslavia to allow sworn enemies to co-exist in peace. Cajoled by international mediators, they face the daunting task of dividing up the ruins of Bosnia to give separatist Serbs a territory of their own while meeting Bosnian government demands for a unified state. A second issue on the table is the peaceful return of Croatia's eastern Slavonia region from rebel Serbs to government control, with the threat of Zagreb's armed intervention if the talks fail. U.S. President Bill Clinton, who has put his full weight behind the peace initiative, insisted the parallel talks must not fail. "It may be the last chance we have for a very long time," he said on Tuesday. "Only the parties to this terrible conflict can end it. The world now looks to them to turn the horror of war to the promise of peace." The parties themselves, the leaders of Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia expressed cautious optimism when they arrived on Tuesday evening at the high-security conference site, Wright-Patterson air force base near Dayton. But after four years of devastation, 200,000 killed or missing and more than two million displaced, nobody was underestimating the difficulties facing the talks, which could go on for weeks. Meanwhile the Bosnian Serbs are continuing to expel Bosnian Muslims and Croats from Serb-held areas of northern Bosnia, in contravention of the terms of the current Bosnian ceasefire, the state-run Croatian news agency Hina said in Zagreb. Some 44 Bosnians — 36 Muslims and eight Croats — who had been "violently thrown out of their homes by the Bosnian Serbs," crossed the Sava River from Bosnia into Croatia late Tuesday, the agency said. They were in Wednesday in Croatian town of Davor, it said. On Tuesday, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said that "ethnic cleansing" of the Croats and Muslims from the region was continuing. Over 22,000 Muslims and Croats have been kicked out of the area by the Serb authorities since Aug. 14, 1995, according to UNHCR figures. Of these, some 14,417 are Bosnian Croats, 7,619 Muslims and 41 belong to different ethnic minorities. U.S. chief negotiator Richard Holbrooke said in Dayton on Wednesday the opposing factions were hardening their positions in advance of the talks and he could not be sure of a successful outcome. "They are digging in," he told NBC television's "Today" show. "They're hardening their positions over the last few days in anticipation of very tough talks and we're not promising anything here except our best shot." Bosnia's Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic said he had high hopes the talks would bring "justice and democracy." "We cannot revive the dead. We cannot revive the 17,000 children dead in Bosnia. But we can get justice here and that justice means a fully functional Bosnian state, integrity, sovereignty, justice and democracy." Arriving amid controversy over whether he should be allowed to attend at all, Serbia's President Slobodan Milosevic said he was optimistic the talks would yield a settlement.

Opposition accuses Baghdad of blast that killed 28 in north

ANKARA (Agencies) — An Iraqi opposition official said on Wednesday Baghdad was responsible for the bomb that killed at least 28 people and wounded 70 in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq. "It was definitely the Iraqi regime that did it," Hamid Al Bayati, London representative of the Supreme Council for the Iraqi Resistance in Iraq (SCIRI), told Reuters by telephone. The Iraqi National Congress (INC) umbrella opposition group, which wants to overthrow President Saddam Hussein, said at least 28 people died on Tuesday when a bomb exploded in its security office in the town of Salahuddin in northern Iraq. The London press office of the organisation said work was still under way to clear the rubble. The Ankara office of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), which controls Salahuddin, said the number of bomb attacks had risen in the town, but it was too early to speculate on the identity of the bombers. The KDP is one of two warring Iraqi Kurdish groups that have split the region into competing territories. The INC, headquartered in northern Iraq since 1992, has tried to mediate between the KDP and rival Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). Since the end of the 1991 Gulf war northern Iraq has been protected from attacks by Baghdad by a Western allied air force based in Turkey. Iraqi Kurds have often blamed Baghdad for attacks in northern Iraq, including some directed at aid agencies to rebuild the region. In early September an Iraqi Kurdish leader escaped unhurt when a bomb planted at a roadside in the PUK-controlled city of Erbil was detonated by remote control as his motorcade passed. The INC said Monday that Shiite Muslim rebels had been deployed in northern Iraq to launch joint attacks on Iraqi government forces. An unspecified number of militiamen from the Badre Brigade arrived south of the city of Sulaymaniya. The INC has launched an investigation to try to determine who was behind the blast. "We condemn this monstrous action. We are waiting for the outcome of the investigations but it seems Saddam Hussein had a hand in it."

(Continued on page 7)

UAE likely to spare maid from the whip

AL 'AIN (R) — President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan may pardon the young Filipina maid facing 100 lashes in a United Arab Emirates prison, sources close to the case said on Wednesday.

"It (a pardon) is not definite but it is under serious consideration," one of the sources told Reuters.

An Islamic Sharia law court on Monday sentenced the maid, Sarah Balabagan, to 100 lashes and a year in jail for killing her 70-year-old Gulf Arab employer.

She would then be deported. The sentence reignited an international outcry sparked by an earlier death sentence against her for the premeditated murder last year of Almas, Mohammad Al Baloushi in this oasis town.

She said she stabbed him 34 times in self-defence as he raped her, a plea rejected at her second trial although the verdict at the first hearing was that she had been raped.

Protests in Manila were rapidly followed by pleas from the French foreign ministry and members of the U.S. Congress for her to be spared corporal punishment.

The prospect of death by firing squad was swept aside last month after Sheikh Zayed persuaded the Baloushi family to accept 150,000 dirhams (\$41,000) blood money in exchange for dropping their insistence on her execution.

The UAE leader was praised in Philippines newspapers for his compassion. One paper said he had shown that mercy could be found even in the harsh Arabian desert.

Much international attention focused on the maid's age. Ms. Balabagan and her family said she was 16 but the

UAE government, citing her passport as evidence, said she was 28. Philippines authorities said her papers were forged by labour racketeers to get her a job in the Gulf.

Fresh outrage at the prospect of a caning was undimmed by assurances that Ms. Balabagan would not be flogged violently.

The lashes — to be administered by a policewoman holding a book tucked under her arm — would be purely symbolic and painless. Philippines President Fidel Ramos's chief of staff Ruben Torres said in an attempt to ease public shock.

The chief judge who pronounced Monday's sentence, Sheikh Biya Ben Salig, later told Reuters the number of lashes at any one time would depend on Ms. Balabagan's pain threshold.

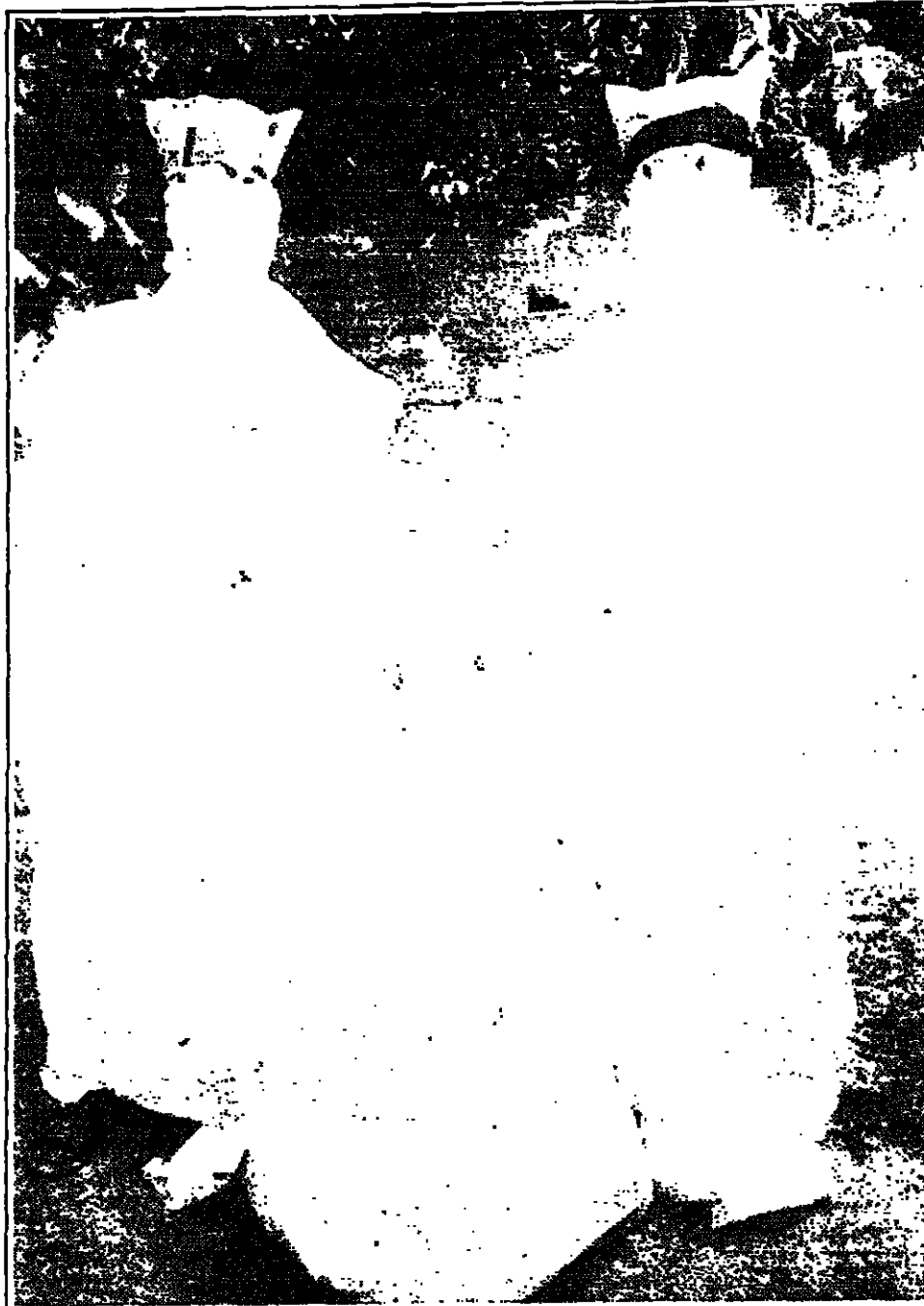
In a telephone call to her father from prison on Tuesday, Ms. Balabagan pleaded for mercy and appealed to Sheikh Zayed to pardon her.

The maid's parents, Karim and Bai Balabagan, took her bananas and fresh clothing when they visited her in Al 'Ain prison on Wednesday.

Philippines embassy officials present at the reunion, their first meeting since Monday's sentence, found the maid dressed in a bright purple blouse and dark skirt and in a subdued mood.

They said she told her parents: "I am willing to take the lashes if it means immediate freedom. But I'm still hoping for a pardon from Sheikh Zayed. If being lashed means freedom now, I will take it."

She also told her parents she saw two Filipina women being lashed in prison, the officials said. She massaged one of them to comfort her after the lashing.



MILITANT REMINDER: Palestinian members of Islamic Jihad, whose leader Fathi Shaqaqi was killed in Malta on Oct. 26, wear shrouds dotted with blood, speak to reporters in Gaza threatening Israel and the U.S. for the killing of Shaqaqi (see page one) (AFP photo)

Belgian court easy on Somalia soldiers

BRUSSELS (R) — A Brussels military court on Tuesday acquitted nine Belgian soldiers accused of mistreating Somali children during a United Nations mission in 1993, and gave another an eight-day suspended jail sentence.

Judgment was suspended in the case against six remaining soldiers from a group of 16, based in Somalia as part of a peacekeeping mission.

All 16 had been accused of threatening behaviour and violence against young Somalis who entered their camp and frequently stole personal effects and equipment.

Lieutenant Bruno Vandervellen, given the eight-day suspended sentence, admitted carrying out mock executions, making the children dig what they thought would be their graves and frightening

them by firing into the air. The prosecutor had demanded six-months imprisonment.

"(The judgement) takes account of the situation on the ground," said lawyer Jacques Piron.

Mr. Piron had defended another soldier accused of dragging a child from a bridge over a river said to be infested with crocodiles.

"Maybe it was excessive behaviour, but the court martial considered that in the exceptional circumstances of Somalia it was acceptable," he said, speaking after the judgement.

"It was perhaps a way of reacting to children who, excessively and repeatedly, came to their camp and stole their civilian and military material," Mr. Piron added.

In 1993 some 1,000 Belgian U.N. peacekeepers were in Somalia, mainly in Kisumu.

They were responsible for patrolling an area about twice the size of their home country.

In July of that year independent human rights group Africa Rights published allegations of abuses by U.N. troops in Somalia and singled out the Belgian force as being particularly brutal and hated as a virtual army of occupation.

The Belgian defence ministry said at the time incidents in the report had been blown up out of proportion.

More than 30,000 U.N. troops were deployed at the peak of the U.N. operation, begun in 1992 to keep militia-men and bandits from blocking supplies to end famine in the country.

Study: Masada siege lasted only weeks, not months

TEL AVIV (AP) — Taking a whack at a cherished legend of Jewish valor, an American scholar says the Roman siege of the mountaintop fortress of Masada lasted weeks — not years as many Israelis believe.

Calculating the Roman army's work capacity, Jonathan Roth of San Jose State University in California concluded that the siege lasted, at most, two months after the 10th legion arrived at the steep-sided Mesa near the Dead Sea, where 967 Jewish zealots were holding out.

"The siege only lasted as long as it took to build the ramp" leading up to the fortress, Mr. Roth said in a telephone interview from California. "That took a maximum of four weeks, a maximum of eight and most

probably about six weeks."

Some Israeli archaeologists are challenging the conclusion, saying it ignores elements like the extreme heat of the Dead Sea area. Meir Ben-Dov, who helped excavate Masada in the 1960s, maintains the siege lasted about eight months.

Masada, southeast of Jerusalem, was the last outpost of the zealots during the Jewish revolt against Rome that began in 66 A.D. After Roman battering rams breached the fortress gates, the Jews committed suicide rather than be taken prisoner.

First-century historian Josephus Flavius reported that the Romans laid siege to Masada in 73 A.D. while building a ramp about 90 metres tall. Most archaeologists have estimated the siege lasted between four and

seven months. Popular wisdom holds it lasted years.

The notion that Jewish zealots held the Romans at bay became one of modern Israel's most compelling national myths. At one time, Israeli armoured troops swore allegiance on the plateau by declaring "Masada shall not fall again."

Mr. Roth, an assistant professor of history, said the story has been greatly exaggerated.

He said the Roman forces numbered some 9,600, not including thousands of slaves and conscripted Jewish labourers. They first built a 4.2-kilometre stone wall surrounding the plateau and then erected the ramp, which, according to Dan Gill of the geological survey of Israel, was laid on a natural

Turkey assails Russia over PKK

ANKARA (R) — Turkey on Wednesday criticised Russia for allowing a meeting of a Kurdish group that includes representatives of rebels fighting a separatist insurgency in Turkey and demanded it be stopped immediately.

"It is up to Russia to immediately heal the wound that has been inflicted on bilateral relations," Foreign Ministry spokesman Omer Akbel told a news briefing.

"We now expect the meeting to be stopped."

Mr. Akbel said Turkey did not accept Russia's explanation that they had allowed the meetings as it was originally billed as a scientific seminar and not a political gathering.

Turkey at the start of the week lodged a complaint with the Russian ambassador over the three-day meeting in Moscow that began on Monday. Mr. Akbel said the meetings could adversely affect relations between the two countries.

The Kurdish Labour parliament-in-exile includes representatives of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), whose 11-year fight with the Turkish army for autonomy or independence in southeast Turkey has killed more than 18,000 people.

Russia has denounced the meeting, saying it had nothing to do with the parliament-in-exile. The inauguration of the group last April in the Hague sparked a diplomatic row between Turkey and the Netherlands.

Mr. Akbel also welcomed a call by the European Parliament's foreign affairs committee to renew contacts with Turkish deputies by lifting its block on the Turkey-European parliament joint committee.

"The European parliament, by doing this, will correct a mistake it made in the past," Mr. Akbel said.

The block was instituted last year to protest against the trial of eight Kurdish parliamentarians for alleged separatist activities. Four remain in jail serving 15-year terms.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Suharto: No Israel ties discussed

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesian President Suharto said on Wednesday he did not discuss opening diplomatic ties with Israel during his recent talks with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. "The meeting was to exchange information, so there were no other problems discussed, such as diplomatic relations, etc.," President Suharto told reporters on board his aircraft. He was returning to Indonesia after an 18-day trip to the Americas, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. "The meeting was only a continuation of my (previous) meeting... because Israel sees Indonesia as the country whose majority of people are Muslim," he said. President Suharto held talks with Mr. Rabin in New York on Oct. 21, the second such meeting between the two leaders. Mr. Rabin made a surprise visit to Indonesia two years ago to meet President Suharto, the first by an Israeli leader, but Jakarta has so far ruled out opening diplomatic ties.

Iranian diplomat released from Argentine hospital

BUENOS AIRES (AP) — Iran's top diplomat was released from hospital Tuesday, 10 days after he was shot and seriously wounded by a gunman on a motorcycle. Under tight security and accompanied by family members, Charge d'Affaires Gholamali Rajabi Yazdi drove home from the Sacred Family Clinic where he had been held in intensive care for three days. A gunman shot Mr. Rajabi Yazdi through his car window on Oct. 21 as he was driving through the suburb of Belgrano with his wife and two young daughters. The diplomat managed to keep driving until he reached the medical clinic. Reports did not say whether his family was injured. The Iranian government blamed the attack on Israel, which denied involvement. A senior Iranian official travelled to Buenos Aires last Sunday to investigate the shooting. The Israeli government, local Jewish organisations and some Argentine officials have blamed Iran for backing the bombing of a Jewish cultural centre that killed 95 people in July 1994. Iran also was suspected in the 1992 bombing of the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires, which killed 29 people.

Eight killed in Saudi fire

RIYADH (AFP) — Eight people died in their sleep early Wednesday when a fire swept through an apartment building in Saudi Arabia's southwestern city of Abha, the newspaper Al Riyadh reported. General Salah Al Wabel, civil defence chief in the Asir region, told the newspaper most of the dead were Saudis and that seven other people were hurt in the blaze which may have been caused by a short circuit.

Riyadh, Ankara plan joint anti-drugs fight

RIYADH (AFP) — Saudi Arabia and Turkey are trying to hammer out a cooperation accord to fight drug trafficking, Turkish ambassador to Riyadh Tuncel Kurtul said Tuesday. "Contacts are going on between officials from the two countries' interior ministries to look at documents linked to a cooperation accord to fight the trafficking of drugs," he said without giving any date for the signing of such an agreement. Four Turks caught smuggling drugs into the kingdom were publicly beheaded by sword in Saudi Arabia on Aug. 11 and 14. And another 70 Turkish nationals are detained in Saudi prisons for trafficking narcotics with 20 having been sentenced to death, the Turkish Foreign Ministry said. Ankara has opted for a "discreet diplomacy" in the affair in order not to harm its fate, Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman Omer Akbel said in August. The Saudi anti-drug squad announced Tuesday it had arrested several foreigners and seized 45 kilograms of heroin worth \$14 million, the biggest haul for years. Since 1987 Saudi Arabia has imposed the death penalty on drug traffickers and repeat abusers. Riyadh has carried out a record 191 beheadings this year, mainly for drug trafficking.

OAU to send 50 observers to Algeria

ADDIS ABABA (R) — The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) said on Wednesday it was sending 50 observers to Algeria to monitor a presidential election. The observers, consisting of OAU staff and representatives of member states, were being sent for the Nov. 16 election in response to a request from the Algerian government. The team would set up command post in Algiers and deploy across the 48 regions of Algeria for the election, it added. African diplomats in Addis Ababa said Musa Traore, the former president of Mali, might lead the observer team to Algeria, leaving Addis Ababa on Nov. 11. An OAU spokesman declined to comment on who would head the observer mission.

Kuwait's Arab, Western allies plan war games

KUWAIT (R) — U.S. officers have demonstrated to Kuwaiti war management computer programme to Arab and Western counterparts preparing exercises among Gulf war coalition countries, Kuwait's Defence Ministry said Wednesday. "The (computer) system is being used outside the U.S. for the first time," a ministry statement said after four days of talks by officers from Egypt, Syria, France, the United States, Britain and six Gulf Arab countries. It said the allies used the so-called Battle Analysis System to draw up scenarios for exercise. The ultimate aim was showing the 1991 alliance against Iraq is still in operation. The exercise from April 13-17 will be a computer generated command post manoeuvre to help the 11 allies standardise procedures and communications and improve team-building skills and coordination on logistics and fighting.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 7311114

PROGRAMME TWO	
13:00	1st — The Happy Professor
13:30	2nd — The Happy Professor
14:00	3rd — My Secret Identity
14:30	4th — Mountain Men
15:00	5th — The New Leave It to Beaver
15:30	6th — Gillette World Sport Special
16:00	7th — White Heat
17:00	Children's Programme: Cocotte Minute
17:30	Varieties and game show — Le Monde Est a Vous
19:00	News in French
19:15	Magazine — Archimede
19:30	News in English
19:45	National Geographic
20:15	The Album Show
21:00	The New Avengers
22:00	News in English
22:30	Feature film: "Cogan's Bluff"
23:50	The Thorn Birds

PRAYER TIMES

04:50	Fajr
05:45	(Sunrise) Duha
11:19	Dhuhr
14:23	Asr
16:50	Maghrib
18:05	Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church, Swifflah, Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 636440	De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622366	Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 652626	Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	St. Elizabeth Church Tel. 771751
Armenia International Church Tel. 625258	Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 649322
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691	The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Fair weather conditions are expected to prevail during the weekend with skies partly cloudy. There will be a chance of scattered showers and winds northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Min./Max. temp.	
Amman	13/21
Aqaba	17/27
Deserts	11/24
Jordan Valley	17/27
Yesterday's high temperatures:	
Amman 24 Aqaba 26 Humidity readings: Amman 32 per cent. Aqaba 52 per cent.	
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Ghaleb Zaidan	736011
Dr. Waseem Hazi	779474
Dr. Fakhri Bilal	663412
Dr. Bilal Al Sayid	890280
Firas pharmacy	661912
Ferdous pharmacy	778336
Al Asma pharmacy	637055
Naimah pharmacy	625672
Al Salati pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shmoun pharmacy	637660
Narouh pharmacy	625672
Najih pharmacy	647632
IRBID:	
Dr. Ali Al Omari	272032
Al Quds pharmacy	(—)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Yousef Abu Sa'd	980400
Khalaf pharmacy 905417	
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Emergency	630341
Rescue	199
Fire Brigade	192, 621111, 637777
Blood Bank	617101
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	890390
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	605800
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	661176
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	787111
Complaints	(—)
Telephone Information (Directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	(—)
Reprints	623101
Abdullah Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	681101
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	06-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport	06-53200
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussain Medical Centre	813813/2
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn	642818
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn	642412
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Malhas, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmoun	670771
Shmoun Hospital	660131
University Hospital	645845
Al-Muhsen Hospital	667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali	666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali	664166
Italian, Al-Muhajreen	771101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh	771101/26
Army, PMarka	891617/5
Queen Alia Hospital	602240/50
Amal Hospital	607155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery	865199
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	09793323
Zarqa National Hospital	(—)
Irbid:	
Irbid Suna Hospital	09790560
Al Hama Modern Hospital	09796672
Al Hama Hospital	09796690
IRBID:	
Princess Basma Hospital	02127555
Grech Catholic Hospital	02127275
Im Al-Nadous Hospital	02124700
AQABA:	
Princess Haya Hospital	03134111
FOR THE TRAVELLER	
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
04:00	Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
07:20	Sanaa (RJ)
07:20	Aqaba (RJ)
09:20	Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
09:30	New Delhi (RJ)
10:05	Beirut (RJ)
10:20	Colombo (RJ)
10:50	Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
16:25	Jeddah (add) (RJ)
16:45	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:35	Muscat (RJ)
17:50	Kuala Lumpur (add) (RJ)
18:25	Athens (RJ)
18:40	Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
19:10	Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)
19:35	Al Ain, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
19:35	Rome (RJ)
23:30	Larnaca (RJ)
00:30	Jeddah (add) (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
12:40	Ahu Dhabi, Doha (GF)
13:30	Sharjah (AH)
13:00	Riyadh (SV)
DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
06:15	Beirut (RJ)
06:30	Aqaba (RJ)
07:15	Muscat (RJ)
10:50	Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ)
11:45	Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
11:15	Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
12:05	New Delhi (RJ)
12:45	London (RJ)
12:55	Athens (RJ)
13:00	Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
19:30	Jeddah (add) (RJ)
19:50	Larnaca (RJ)
20:15	Bahrain, Dubai (RJ)
20:25	Jeddah (RJ)
21:00	(—)
21:00	New Delhi, Kuala Lumpur (add) (RJ)
21:05	(RJ)
21:45	Cairo (RJ)
22:05	Jakarta (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
06:50	Beirut, London (BA)
07:45	Beirut (ME)
08:00	Ahu Dhabi, Al Ain, Muscat (GF)
13:30	Sharjah (AH)
14:30	Riyadh (SV)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.	
Apple	700/95
Banana	180/170
Cabbage (Mukammal)	60
Carrot	200/150
Cauliflower	190/120
Cucumber (large)	200/150
Cucumber (small)	320/120
Eggplant	160/180
Garlic	200/140
Grapes	650/500
Grape Fruit	230/170
Lemon	240/170
Melon (large)	140/120
Melon (small)	200/140
Olives (green)	450/350
Onion (green)	400/120
Onion (dry)	250/150
Orange	500/400
Pepper (hot)	200/150
Pepper (sweet)	250/150
Potato	240/220
Radish	200/120
Spinach	180/120
String Beans	760/650
Tangerine	280/180
Tomato	140/120



HRH Princess Basma Wednesday meets with the head of the regional office of the United Nations Development Programme, Sa'ad Farji, UNDP Resident Representative Jørgen Lissner at the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (Petra photo)

UN presents Princess Basma with anniversary booklet

AMMAN (Petra) — A booklet issued on the United Nations' 50th anniversary and which includes two Jordanian projects carried out in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was presented Wednesday to HRH Princess Basma by the head of the regional office of the UNDP, Sa'ad Farji.

The UN official also delivered to the Princess a prominent personalities including the Princess and HRH Crown Prince Hassan. Princess Basma thanked the UNDP for its contributions to Jordanian development projects especially those aiming to improve the living conditions of the

poor and rural communities with particular attention to women and children. The Princess reviewed with the UN official the role of the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) through 45 centres around the country. UNDP Resident Representative Jørgen Lissner and QAF officials attended the meeting.

Magic World looking for legal options in alleged defamation issue

By Amy Henderson
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — An American company Wednesday said it is continuing to explore legal options against a local newspaper for a story it alleges is defamatory. Richard Ligon, chief operations officer of Magic World, a company planning for a multi-million dollar theme park on the southern shore of Aqaba, said that Magic World, and its parent company, Group LLC, would continue to consult with legal councils in Amman to examine all possible legal options against an Arabic daily after the paper failed to print a retraction of statements published on Oct. 24 and 28 alleging that the company was a "phony entity" with a \$200 capital. The daily on Wednesday ran what Mr. Ligon called a "heavily verbatim" statement the company made to the press prior to the open-

ing day of the Middle East and North Africa summit, which said that the comments published in the paper were "absolutely false." "What was published today (Wednesday) should have been done in the first place," said Alan Fulscher, director of business ventures at Group LLC, "but it's not a retraction. We would like a full apology and a full retraction of those statements." The two businessmen said that they had written communication from the daily saying that "the company bore us no ill-will and that the information was received from 'official sources,' and that the paper 'indicated it was planning to write a retraction.' "We would like to express our disappointment that the paper did not print a retraction," Mr. Fulscher said. Aqaba Regional Authority (ARA) President Fayez Khasawneh said last week

that after investigating the company, official information held that Magic World's financial situation "was contrary to what was printed in the press." Group LLC also presented a letter to the Jordan Times from the company's certified public accountant which stated that Group LLC holds assets in excess of \$3 million, and showed the company's expenditures on the Aqaba project thus far to be nearly \$1 million. To date, Magic World has signed a letter of agreement with ARA to build a resort on 566 dunums of Aqaba's south coast, complete with a 400-dunum theme park and a 256 room, five-star hotel. Mr. Khasawneh told the Jordan Times that ARA was prepared to proceed with the ratification of the project and expected it to be referred to the cabinet for debate.

Delegations leave Jordan on optimistic note

AMMAN (Petra) — The Kuwaiti delegation to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit led by Abdul Muhsein Hanif left for home Wednesday praising the outcome of the meetings which ended Tuesday evening and saying that the region should start feeling the results of the three-day conference in the near future. Mr. Hanif, who is under-secretary of the Kuwaiti Finance Ministry, said his country did not submit any proposals for projects but that they did take part in discussions over various proposals at the national and the regional levels. He noted that the region has vast potential for investors by the private sectors. The Kuwaiti official and his delegation were seen off at the airport by Finance Ministry Secretary General Suleiman Hafez and the

Kuwaiti charge d'affaires in Amman. Also Wednesday Director General of the Qatari Chamber of Industry and Trade Majed Malik said the chamber will soon organise an exchange of visits to Qatar and Jordan by Jordanian and Qatari businessmen to follow up discussions on topics taken up by the MENA meeting. The 43-member Qatari delegation discussed projects for joint investments to be carried out in Jordan and the Palestine self-rule areas, according to Mr. Malik. He said members of the Qatari delegation to the MENA summit included Jordanian and Palestinian businessmen living and working in Qatar. The first Deputy Foreign Minister of China Tian Ching left Amman for the West Bank Wednesday after taking part in the MENA



Kuwaiti Under-secretary of Finance Abdul Muhsein Hanif Wednesday is seen off from Marka Airport by his Jordanian counterpart Suleiman Hafez (Petra photo)

conference at the head of a 13-member delegation. He described the meeting as highly successful. The Chinese official said

that the Chinese delegation held talks with Jordanian business people on prospects for joint investment projects. Mr. Ching

also said the Chinese government supports and will organise further meetings between the business communities in both countries.

Mideast needs 30m more telephone lines, says company executive

By Cathy King
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Middle East region needs 30 million more telephone lines and \$112 billion to procure them, a senior executive of the communications giant, Motorola, has said.

Telecommunications constitute one essential component for economic development, as well as a source of education for a "booming generation", a panel of six speakers agreed during a Middle East and North Africa (MENA) summit workshop on Information Superhighway and Telecommunications held Tuesday evening.

Regional telephone density currently registers an average 5.5 per cent, but to accelerate economic development this needs to be increased to 30 per cent, said Nynex (USA) President Dan Petri.

"In Jordan, there are six to seven telephone lines per 100 people. This is slightly higher than the regional

average. In the United Arab Emirates, there are 30 per 100, and this level needs to be seen throughout region," Mr. Petri said.

One barrier to such expansion of telecommunication networks is the justification of the cost against the value, noted Hanan Achsaf, managing and country director of Motorola, Israel.

Mr. Achsaf said: "There is a need for 30 million more telephone lines in the Middle East" and this would require \$112 billion in financing, he added.

Among the panelists there was also a consensus on the need for regional cooperation and strategic partnerships, as well as the necessity for training in telecommunications.

"There is a need for more trained people... there must be investment in people... there is a booming generation of youth who are waiting to be used," said Olivetti's Senior Vice-President Bruno Lamborghini from Italy.

Mr. Lamborghini added that the countries of the region needed to "open their borders" to benefit from each others' telecommunication systems and advancements, and to improve "links between the Middle East and Europe."

The vice president and general manager of strategic markets for Ericsson Telecom, Goran Rasmussen, reiterated the call to promote regional and international cooperation and said that time should be spent on the "harmonisation of telecommunication standards" regionally and internationally, particularly with Europe given its geographical proximity.

Out of Jordan's 27 official projects proposed during this week's summit, four were dedicated to telecommunications.

The projects included frequency management and licensing, a national informatics infrastructure, digital telecommunication infrastructure and project opportunities for the private

sector. As a first step towards modernising and liberalising the Kingdom's telecommunications sector, the government approved a new Telecommunications Law which is currently waiting parliamentary endorsement.

The law will provide a framework for regulated competition and calls for the establishment of an independent telecommunications regulatory office.

The regulatory office will manage the radio frequency spectrum so as to promote the delivery of quality telecommunications services while maximising the return from this valuable but limited resource.

During the economic forum two telecommunication agreements were signed between Jordan and international corporations.

Announced on Sunday was a sealing of a joint venture between ASAS Trading and Investment and Sprint, a major U.S. telecommunications firm

that will provide Internet access to Jordan.

Sprint International (USA) President Chris Rooney said during Tuesday's workshop that his company had already hired a first group of engineers for the project implementation.

Tuesday saw the signing of a JD 25 million deal between the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) and Siemens, a major German electronics manufacturer.

Siemens will supply, install and commission local line plant networks, with a capacity of 300,000 subscriber lines. The project, which has been financed by a loan from the European Investment Bank, is scheduled for completion in 1998.

Within the next three years, the TCC therefore hopes to have increased the penetration of telephone services to about 13 per cent.

British Institute looks for clues to ancient life in Wadi Faynan

By Lola Keilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A Byzantine cemetery recently excavated in southern Jordan could contain some of the most significant clues to ancient life in the region despite the dilapidated state of some of the tombs there, according to the British Institute for Archaeology and History (BIAAH) which was established in 1978.

More than half of the 1,200 graves excavated so far have been pilfered. The cemetery, which is part of the archaeological site in Wadi Faynan, was known to exist in the 19th century

but excavations started only in March 1994 by the BIAAH.

Wadi Faynan, located in the north of Petra, was considered the industrial heartland of Jordan due to copper-mining and processing carried out there as early as 4500 B.C.

The wadi entombs the remains of earlier settlements, dating as far back as the Neolithic to the medieval period.

"The excavation projects are currently being carried out by the BIAAH, in cooperation with the Department of Antiquities and the Yarmouk University," said Alison McQuitty, director

of the institute. Some of the headstones in the cemetery have crosses engraved on them, and one was found with an engraving of a Nabatean god.

The one grave that archaeologists have chosen to uncover contained the skeleton of an adult male who had been buried with his leather shoes and wrapped in a shroud, but no "grave goods" were found. The site contains the largest collection of Byzantine skeletons in Jordan.

The first phase of the project was completed in Aug. 1994, and two more phases should be carried out: the planning of the

south cemetery and Khirbat Faynan.

Ms. McQuitty also said that the financial support for Wadi Faynan was given by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of Great Britain, but the Byzantine cemetery excavation project is financed by the British embassy.

"The bulk of our financing is coming from private individuals, so we aim to increase excavation awareness through fund-raising," Ms. McQuitty, who has been in Jordan since 1981, told the Jordan Times.

Plans for further excavation of the Byzantine cemetery is considered to be

extremely important because 700 gravestones have been stolen, and grave robbing is still continuing.

"A number of special surveys, environmental, ecological and archaeological should also be part of the study in advance of further development," Ms. McQuitty said.

Khirbat Faynan, the main settlement site with the collapsed remains of dense Roman-Byzantine stone buildings, needs an immediate and surface survey for pottery and artefacts, especially since the ancient field is still in use today.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FUND-RAISING FOR EXCAVATION

Thursday at 5.00pm

*Fund-raising event to finance the excavation project in Wadi Faynan, organised by the British Institute at Amman for Archaeology and History, at the British Embassy Club on Friday (noon - 4:00 pm) (Tel. 841317)

SEMINAR

*"The Aftermath of Women's Beijing Conference—Jordanian Impressions" (in Arabic) with the participation of Khairi Mansour, Asma Khader and Nawal Fa'uri at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman on Thursday at 6.00pm.

FILM

*"The Mosquito Coast," at the American Center on Thursday at 5.00 p.m.

*"Kika" at the Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman on

BANI HAMIDA FALL EXHIBITION

*The Bani Hamida Women's Weaving Project presents "Winds of Change" its fall exhibition at the Jerusalem Insurance Company in Shmeisani (Tel. 658696)

EXHIBITIONS

*Metal works by Ammar Khammash at Liwan, off Wadi Saqra Street. Also displaying all kinds of handicrafts. (Tel 699141)

*Paintings by Salam Kanaan and ceramics by Najwa Annab and Margaret Tadros at Alia Art Gallery.

Under The Patronage of HRH Princess Sumaya El Hassan

The Wadi Faynan Ghoul & Ghosts Gig
At the British Embassy Club
Friday 3rd November 1995, 12-4pm.

Free raffle (airline tickets), fun games, good food
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Contact Tel: 841317

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Sri Lanka army fears rebel chemical weapon attacks

COLOMBO (Agencies) — Sri Lanka's army fears rebel ambushes and possible chemical weapon attacks as it stands poised to seize the northern Tamil Tiger guerrilla stronghold of Jaffna, military sources said Wednesday.

Aid workers say the army could move into Jaffna City possibly "within hours" if it wanted to after a mass exodus of more than 100,000 rebels and civilians left it a virtual ghost town.

"They may have tried to depopulate Jaffna so that they can use chemical weapons when our troops move in," a senior military officer told Reuters.

The rebels used chlorine gas to attack troops in 1990 during a failed attempt to overrun an army camp, but caused no harm. The officer said the army was taking the chemical weapon threat seriously and had distributed gas masks to some of the troops.

Although soldiers were close to the outskirts of the battered city their advance would be slowed by minefields, booby-traps and ambushes laid by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), he said.

"We should be able to move in quickly if there is no resistance," he said. "But we're obviously going to be careful of walking into a trap."

A senior Western relief worker in touch with colleagues in Jaffna told Reuters the town looked almost empty with the army just north of the city.

"It could be in Jaffna City within hours today," he said. "The LTTE has left

Jaffna City. Apparently they're not ready to fight in Jaffna. This is good for the people, but it has triggered an exodus of civilians and we're trying to ensure their safety."

He said only those who could not move remained at the Jaffna Hospital which army sources said they want to capture to block its use by the rebels.

In the eastern Batticaloa district, the rebels killed eight police commandos in an ambush Wednesday morning, the military said.

An army statement said five soldiers and 10 rebels died in Tuesday's fighting for two road junctions on the way to Jaffna. Air force ground attack aircraft bombed the rebels in the Urumpirai and Kopay areas, it said.

At least 35 rebels and eight soldiers were killed Monday night when troops beat off rebel attempts to infiltrate army defenses, it said. The bodies of 20 rebels, including eight shattered by shelling, were found during a later search.

Rebel resistance to the army's two-pronged advance crumbled Monday after troops captured Neerveli, 10 kilometres northeast of Jaffna, where the rebels had an underground hospital and bunker complex and their air wing headquarters.

Three army divisions of more than 21,000 men backed by tanks, artillery and aircraft have pushed south from their Palaly Air Base and now stand less than 5-1/2 kilometres of the city centre.

The offensive launched on

Oct. 17 is the army's biggest against the Tigers, fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils in the north and east of the island nation. More than 50,000 people have died in the 12-year war.

At least 751 rebels have been killed and more than 2,000 wounded in the offensive. The army has lost 192 men and had more than 700 wounded.

K. Ponnambalam, the top government administrator in Jaffna, told Reuters he had urged the government to declare Temmarachi, the southeastern quarter of the peninsula where 65 per cent of Jaffna's population have taken refuge, a safety zone.

He said he had asked the government to request aid agencies for immediate shipments of tents, roofing material, food and disinfectant like chlorine required to fight diarrhoea and eye disease spreading fast among refugees.

Indian troops on alert

Meanwhile police in India's southern state of Tamil Nadu have been placed on alert for a possible infiltration of Tamil rebels fleeing an advancing army in Sri Lanka, senior intelligence officers said Wednesday.

"We are keeping a watch at the airport, ports and carrying out random checks at railway stations for any possible infiltration," a senior intelligence officer told Reuters.

The officer, who asked not to be named, said security for Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalitha had also been intensified.

Jayalalitha has been a target of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) since she ordered police in Tamil Nadu in 1991 to crack down on rebels taking refuge in the state.

"In general there is a security alert here because of the situation in Jaffna," he said.

The Indian official dismissed a newspaper report which said LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran had sneaked into Tamil Nadu to elude capture by the Sri Lankan government. "That is nonsense. As of now, Prabhakaran is not here," he said.

The official said heavy patrolling of Indian and Sri Lankan navies along the Palk Strait that separates northern Sri Lanka from southern India would make it difficult for Tigers to sneak into India.

"But anything is possible. Maybe some of their cadres may try to enter India not from southern coast waters but from the east coast, say from Calcutta," he said.

Indian support for the Tigers, which was considerable at one time, has been waning in recent years.

The LTTE is suspected to have assassinated former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991, after Mr. Gandhi sent Indian troops to northern Sri Lanka in 1987 to help Colombo in trying to disarm the Tigers.

But many Indian Tamils sympathetic with Sri Lankan Tamil separatists and some local politicians have appealed for a halt to civilian killings that the Sri Lankan army is alleged to have carried out in the current fighting.



Former South Korean President Roh Tae-Woo looks down as he walks past photographers in Seoul for questioning on the \$650 million slush fund he has admitted amassing while in office from 1987 to 1993 (AFP photo)

S.Korea's Roh grilled on slush funds

SEOUL (R) — With head bowed and whispering "I'm sorry", South Korea's disgraced ex-President Roh Tae-Woo presented himself before prosecutors Wednesday to be grilled over a \$654 million slush fund he amassed in office.

Mr. Roh is the first past or present South Korean head of state to face questioning by prosecutors, the opening step in possible criminal proceedings.

"Today is the saddest day in our constitutional history," said Park Ji-Won, a spokesman for the main opposition National Congress for New Politics.

Live television showed a somber-faced Roh dressed in a black suit pushing open the revolving doors of the prosecutor general's office, his eyes lowered and hands clenched tightly.

"I'm sorry," the retired four-star general said in a low voice after brushing past several hundred reporters.

Prosecutors interrogated Mr. Roh about the \$654 million he confessed to extracting from business groups while president from 1988-93. They want to know exactly who gave him the money, who helped him hide it and where the cash was kept.

Mr. Roh has declared he still has \$242 million, but prosecutors are not taking him at his word.

"The questioning is going smoothly," said Prosecutor

Ahn Kang-Min, who heads the government investigation. Mr. Roh was not expected to emerge from the session until late at night.

"I told prosecutors to ask whether his relatives were involved in amassing the funds or whether he transferred some of the money overseas," Mr. Ahn said.

Foreign Minister Gong Ro-Myoung said Switzerland may be approached for help in tracking down Mr. Roh's money, some of which is reported to be stashed in Swiss bank accounts, Yonhap News Agency reported.

"If and when judicial authorities ask for it, we will request Swiss cooperation through diplomatic channels," Yonhap quoted Mr. Gong as telling a parliamentary session.

Mr. Ahn said that after finishing with Mr. Roh they will begin questioning leaders of the country's sprawling business groups, known as "chaebol".

Television helicopters buzzed overhead as Mr. Roh left his walled home in an exclusive Seoul suburb in a black limousine, part of a four-car motorcade carrying his aides.

Some 3,000 police were stationed outside Mr. Roh's home and around the prosecution office to deal with any protests. But there were none.

Mr. Roh, a decorated Vietnam War veteran,

became a popular hero in 1987 when he announced on television he was rejecting a rubber-stamp nomination to replace then President Chun Doo-Hwan and would instead run for office in the first democratic elections for head of state.

But his term was blighted by labour unrest, economic instability and constant street protests. He is now reviled by ordinary Koreans and abandoned by the ruling Democratic Liberal Party (DLP) he once headed.

Current President Kim Young-Sam, who ran successfully as the DLP candidate in 1992 elections, has accused him of illegally raising funds.

Political analysts say they expect Mr. Roh will be put on trial. Public pressure is mounting for the courts to make an example of him, and with general elections due next April, Mr. Kim must be seen to take a hard line.

Opposition parties are demanding Mr. Roh's arrest and a confession from Mr. Kim that he took money from the ex-president to finance his presidential campaign.

Mr. Kim has denied any involvement in Mr. Roh's slush money, although he has said the ruling party may have taken money from Mr. Roh during the campaign.

Actress accepts libel damages

LONDON (R) — American actress Stephanie Powers accepted undisclosed libel damages and a public apology in the English High Court over allegations that she had sexually harassed a former employee. Powers, 52, was not in court to hear the judgment against Britain's Daily Mail newspaper. The newspaper reported allegations made in California by her former assistant that Powers had sexually harassed him and had committed adultery. It was also alleged that she was an alcoholic. The lawyer for the Daily Mail said the newspaper accepted that Powers was wholly innocent of the allegations and regretted circulating them.

William among top 10 heartthrobs

LONDON (AFP) — Prince William is among Britain's top 10 heartthrobs for teens, despite — or perhaps because of — his appearance at a recent party that earned him a place on the front page of the Sun. A poll by the teenage magazine Smash Hits listed Prince William, second in line for the British throne, as sixth among Britain's top 20 "heart-breakers". The 13-year-old prince trails take singer Mark Owen and Manchester United footballer Ryan Giggs, but comes before actor Johnny Depp and Oasis singer Liam Gallagher in the teen idol sweepstakes.

Singer James Brown arrested

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Soul singer James Brown was arrested Tuesday in South Carolina and charged with "criminal domestic violence" after his wife Adrienne sustained injuries forcing her to be hospitalized, police said.

Brown, 67, was released pending a court appearance, authorities said. He was previously jailed in 1988 and 1991 on assault and weapons charges. Adrienne Brown was previously hospitalized in May for what a local newspaper said was a drug overdose. She previously filed domestic violence complaints against her husband, but later dropped them and refused to testify against him.

Whoopi Goldberg to host Academy Awards

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Actress Whoopi Goldberg will host next year's Academy Awards. "I'm back and I'm thrilled, honey," Goldberg said Tuesday. She had hosted the Oscars once before in 1994. Quincy Jones, who runs the Oscar broadcasts, picked Goldberg to be master of ceremonies after the last host, talk show host David Letterman, got mixed reviews and was not offered a repeat invitation. Nominations for the Oscars will be announced Feb. 13, with the awards show scheduled for March 25.

Hot-footed Beijing police seize fake sneakers

BEIJING (R) — Police in the Chinese capital have won a victory in the race against footwear bootleggers, seizing a batch of fake Reebok sneakers. Beijing media reported. Pirated copies of the running shoe as well as Nike, Adidas, Puma, Asics and other top international brands have flooded Beijing and many other cities, selling for 100 yuan (\$12), against a retail price of 500 yuan (\$61) or more. In the Beijing case, police tipped off by a consumer raided a private businessman's warehouse and seized more than 600 pairs of fake Reeboks worth several thousand U.S. dollars, the report said.

Another blaze reported on disaster-hit Azeri metro

BAKU (R) — Another fire was reported Tuesday on the underground railway network in Azerbaijan's capital Baku, three days after 300 people died in a blaze there, but this time no one was hurt.

A Russian newspaper said passengers fled to safety from toxic fumes.

The incident came as Azeri and Russian investigators hunted for clues to the world's worst underground rail disaster amid speculation in this Transcaucasian state that the deaths may have been caused by sabotage.

Russia's Interfax News Agency quoted deputy Prime Minister Abbas Abbasov as telling a government commission that a train engine caught fire at the Kara Karayev Station Tuesday.

He said it was promptly put out by station workers. No one was hurt.

First findings from the tunnel in central Baku, where Saturday's victims were crushed, electrocuted or burned to death after a fire started under their train, seemed to point away from a bomb attack.

Investigators said late Monday that the bodies did not show evidence of an explosion, although Azerbaijan President Heydar Aliyev said sabotage could not be ruled out.

Security Minister Namig Abbasov told Interfax that underground workers were trying to avoid being blamed for the disaster.

"If there was an explosion, the dead would have had corresponding wounds which were not discovered during investigations," Mr. Abbasov was quoted as saying Tuesday.

But Mr. Aliyev, whose country is facing a parliamentary election on Nov. 12, noted there had been

two bomb attacks on the underground in the last 18 months, a fact which has fuelled the sabotage theory.

Deputy Premier Abbasov was quoted in Russia's Komsomolskaya Pravda daily newspaper as saying the main cause of the disaster was "the ageing metro system which was inherited from the Soviet era".

Interfax quoted him as saying that fire — this time without casualties — hit another Baku underground train Tuesday.

The popular Moscow newspaper Moskovsky Komsomolets reported that toxic fumes spread when the Baku train caught fire, leaving passengers only minutes to escape.

The disaster should serve as a "serious warning" to metro authorities in Moscow and other cities using similar Soviet-era systems, it said.

It said the driver made a

fatal error by stopping in the tunnel instead of going on to the next station — a move which spared loss of life when a train caught fire in Moscow in 1987.

The independent newspaper Izvestiya sounded another warning for the citizens of the Russian capital, reporting that trains were stopped for 16 minutes in Moscow late Monday after oil which had leaked out a track caught fire.

Azeri Health Minister Ali Insanov said at the weekend 289 people were killed in the Baku fire and 269 were hurt, but hospital officials said 337 had died and 270 were injured.

On Tuesday life in Baku, a city of two million people, was more or less back to normal although underground services had been reduced.

Tokyo, U.S. agree not to cut U.S. troops in Japan

TOKYO (R) — Japan and the United States agreed Wednesday not to cut the number of U.S. troops stationed in Japan but to consider redeploying some of them away from Okinawa, U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry said.

In another effort to smooth security ties between the two allies, Mr. Perry also publicly apologised for the alleged involvement of three U.S. servicemen in the rape of a schoolgirl on the southern Japanese island, the incident that set off the current crisis.

After meeting Japan's Defence Minister Seishiro Eto and Foreign Minister Yohsei Kono, Mr. Perry announced that a joint special committee would be set up to study the possibility of reducing the 26,000 U.S. troops on Okinawa by shifting some of them to other parts of Japan.

over the rape of the 12-year-old girl on Sept. 4. The three servicemen go on trial for the rape in a Japanese court on Nov. 7.

Mr. Perry defended the U.S. response to Okinawan anger, saying: "We have responded quickly, effectively and with compassion."

"On behalf of all members of the armed forces, I want to express my deep sorrow and anger for this terrible act," he said in measured tones. "I also want to apologise for the pain and concern this has caused the Japanese people."

Mr. Perry said he felt sadness for the girl and her family, and "anger at the perpetrators whose actions not only caused a tragedy for the victims, but also unfairly reflected on the many fine military personnel in Japan."

Officials have raced to settle the troop controversy ahead of a summit meeting in Tokyo on Nov. 20 between President Bill

Clinton and Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama.

Mr. Perry said that in his meetings with Mr. Eto and Mr. Kono the two sides agreed the United States should keep the current level of 47,000 troops in Japan even if some of them were shifted away from the United States' main bases on Okinawa, 1,600 kilometres south of Tokyo.

"We agreed on the vital importance of the security alliance between Japan and the United States," he said.

"We also agreed that it was vital to supporting that alliance with the United States to maintain a forward-deployed military presence of 100,000 troops in the Asia-Pacific region and 47,000 in Japan."

Mr. Perry said Washington was willing to reduce the 26,000 troops on Okinawa if that was what Japan wanted.

About 70 per cent of U.S. bases in Japan are on Okinawa, where they take up about 20 per cent of the land.

Okinawa Governor Masahide Ota has vowed not to sign new land-lease contracts required to maintain U.S. bases on the island unless the U.S. presence there is reduced.

Before the row, Japan and the United States were already looking at ways to consolidate the number of bases in the country so they occupied less land. Mr. Perry said this process would be speeded up and completed by the end of the year.

He said details of the special joint committee would be announced by Mr. Murayama and Mr. Clinton during their summit.

Mr. Perry said most Japanese recognised the rape case was an "aberration" and that most U.S. troops were "good neighbours".

"I assure you that every American serviceman and woman in Japan has pledged to regain your respect," he said.

Taiwan building fire kills 11

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — Fire engulfed a 14-story building and hotel in southern Taiwan Tuesday, killing 11 people and injuring eight, police said.

Five people were killed jumping from 10th-story balconies to escape the fire, while the others died of smoke inhalation, police said.

Police corrected the death toll from 12 to 11, saying one body was counted twice. They said 20 other people were rescued from the top floor.

Three people were seriously injured, including a man who jumped from a

10th-story room to a lower annex and broke his spine, police said.

The fire broke out at about 2:30 a.m. (1830 GMT Monday) in the complex in Chiayi, 300 kilometres south of Taipei, which houses a department store, movie theatre, restaurant and a hotel in the top four stories, police said.

Among the hotel guests was a 20-member team making a new TV soap opera called A Fool Gets Lucky. Director Tseng Shu-Chu and two workers were killed in the fire, and actor Lin Fu-hsiung was treated in an intensive care

unit for smoke inhalation, police said.

It took 100 firefighters four hours to put out the fire because the building had few windows, firefighter Lin Lou-Yeh said. Mr. Lin said the fire may have started in a second-floor machine shop undergoing renovation, but the cause was still being investigated.

Taiwan has tightened fire safety inspections since a nightclub fire in February killed 64 people. But police said the Chiayi building was not found to be in violation of safety regulations in its last monthly inspection.

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World News

S. Africans vote away apartheid remnants

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South Africans voted away the final remnants of official apartheid Wednesday in the country's first all-race local government elections.

"Last vote to freedom," the mass-circulation Johannesburg Star proclaimed in a banner headline.

President Nelson Mandela, the country's first black leader, said the elections for 688 local authorities appeared to be going well. "I think they are proceeding very smoothly," he told reporters outside Johannesburg City Hall.

Some blacks performed a traditional freedom dance, but the local polls lacked the high drama and tension that surrounded the 1994 national and provincial elections that gave the country black majority rule after centuries of white domination.

The country's normally-bustling commercial heartland was almost deserted except for a line several hundred metres long of blacks waiting to cast their ballots at a polling station in the city hall.

Financial markets were closed after the government proclaimed a public holiday.

A row over the planned arrest Thursday of apartheid-era generals, including former Defence Minister Magnus Malan, in connection with a massacre of 13 blacks eight years ago broke days before the polls.

Although opponents accused Mr. Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) of politicising in announcing the arrests ahead of time, the president said he did not think the furor had overshadowed the elections.

"Oh, no I don't think so. The number of people who are here show that the elections have not been overshadowed," he said in reply to a question.

U.K., Sinn Fein fail to bridge peace chasm

BELFAST (R) — Britain and Sinn Fein, the IRA's political wing, failed to resolve a year-old dead-lock in Northern Ireland's peace process in intensive talks but agreed to meet again to try and overcome "difficulties".

Despite a 15-month-long ceasefire by the Irish Republican Army (IRA), London says it will not invite Sinn Fein to all-party talks until the Republican guerrillas hand in their weapons.

"We have had a detailed discussion. There are major difficulties," Martin McGuinness, Sinn Fein's chief negotiator, told reporters after more than three hours of talks with a British Minister for Northern Ireland, Michael Ancram.

"We have arranged a meeting for Friday. Regrettably, the impasse in the peace process has not been broken."

Mr. Ancram said later it had been a constructive meeting but confirmed that a gap remained on some key issues.

"I made it very clear today what the British government's position was," Mr. Ancram told reporters.

"We made progress on certain issues, and there are other issues — difficult issues — which still need to be addressed."

The talks, the latest in a series of face-to-face contacts, took place in an atmosphere of deep concern about the slow pace of political momentum a year after ceasefires by rival guerrilla groups created a shaky calm.

For 25 years the IRA fought to drive British forces from the province. Protestant guerrillas shot hundreds in Catholic areas where the IRA drew support.

The foes believed truces would give them a political voice in all-party talks

Right-wing Freedom Front leader Constand Viljoen planned to seek a judgement from the Supreme Court in Pietermaritzburg Wednesday to prevent the arrests of Gen. Malan and 10 other former senior officers under a clause in the country's provisional constitution.

"We want to entrench the culture of respect for law and order and for our judiciary. If the court decides in his favour, then we would hold ourselves bound by that," Mr. Mandela said at the city hall.

Few problems were reported after polls opened at 7 a.m. Voters in black townships and traditionally white areas formed queues from early in the morning.

About 13 million people were on the rolls to vote, but about four million of these were in KwaZulu-Natal province and other areas where the elections have been postponed due mainly to demarcation disputes.

Residents in three battle-scarred townships east of Johannesburg's eastern boundary said they hoped newly-elected local councillors would at last begin rebuilding settlements destroyed by past political violence.

"This is the most important vote in my life. It is a vote for my local councillor who will have to look into my immediate needs," said Joel Mkhwanazi, who said he had lived in Khatlehong township for more than 45 years.

In conservative areas in the north of the country, some whites said they were voting to demonstrate support for the concept of autonomy for Afrikaners.

"We need our own state where we can govern ourselves," said a supporter of the white separatist Conservative Party.

Quebec premier quits, Chretien promises reforms

MONTREAL (R) — The narrow defeat of an independence bid in Quebec has sent shockwaves through Canada, bringing down the province's premier and prompting a promise of rapid reforms by Prime Minister Jean Chretien.

A resignation announcement Tuesday by Quebec's separatist premier, Jacques Parizeau, came less than 24 hours after he fell breathlessly short of achieving his dream of creating a French-speaking country in North America.

"I announce today that at the end of the fall (autumn) parliamentary session I will leave the post of premier..." Mr. Parizeau told a news conference in the provincial capital of Quebec City.

He said he had decided long ago to resign if he was defeated in the referendum and the decision was unrelated to a storm of criticism Tuesday after he blamed the referendum loss on Quebec minority ethnic groups.

Mr. Parizeau's move sparked speculation that he will be succeeded by the

charismatic Lucien Bouchard, who almost single-handedly led the separatists to victory after assuming the leadership of a flagging campaign.

Mr. Bouchard, head of the Bloc Quebecois party, is leader of the official opposition in Canada's parliament.

Separatists came within 53,000 votes, out of 4.7 million cast, of winning their second bid for independence in 15 years.

Official preliminary results issued by Quebec's electoral office Tuesday showed 50.56 per cent against separation with 49.44 per cent in favour.

The number of spoiled ballots was 1.82 per cent — larger than the margin of victory. Turnout in the emotional vote was a huge 93 per cent, far outstripping the previous record.

The rest of Canada gasped in relief after averting the crackup of the 128-year-old federation.

But the close result increased the urgency among Canadians to address Quebec's long-

standing demand for protection of its "distinct society."

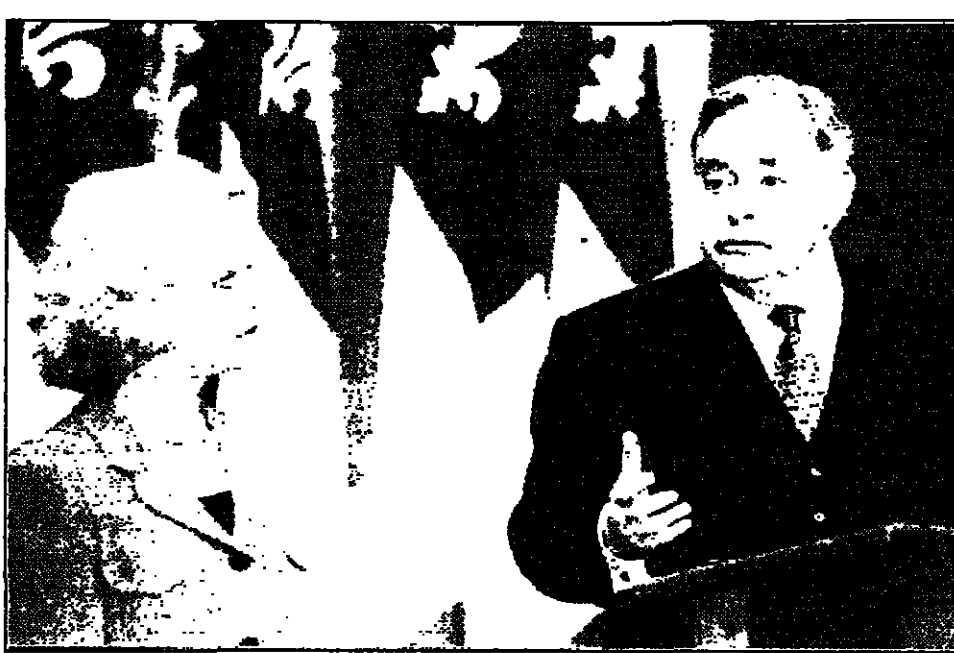
"Is it a wake-up call? I'm hoping so... It might be our last mutual chance," said John Crispo, a political scientist at the University of Toronto. Referring to English Canadians, he told Reuters: "Did they learn a lesson? I think they did."

A chastened Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien, whose political credibility was tarnished by the slim unity victory, said he would move quickly to try to satisfy Quebec aspirations.

He told parliament in Ottawa that he will proceed with changes to the constitution he promised before the referendum. These would respond to Quebec's complaint that its French culture and language have not been accorded proper protection, and give the province a veto over future constitutional changes.

There were signs, however, of a tough fight ahead for constitutional change.

Canada's right-leaning Reform Party, the third



Quebec premier and leader of the secessionists Jacques Parizeau announces his resignation to the press with his wife Lissette at his side in Quebec City (AFP photo)

largest in parliament, rejected calls for distinct status for Quebec.

"Special status for Quebec — it's a non-starter," Reform leader Preston Manning told the House of Commons Tuesday.

Investors cheered the re-

ferendum results, pouring money back into Canadian stocks, bonds and currency, which had been battered in recent weeks by uncertainty about the referendum outcome.

The Toronto Stock Market staged its third highest rally

ever. The Bank of Canada's Bellwether Bank rate fell 1.5 percentage points to 6.18 per cent Tuesday and major Canadian banks responded by lowering the prime lending rates they charge their best customers by 0.25 per cent to 7.75.

Yeltsin meets with top aide in hospital

MOSCOW (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin met his top aide Viktor Ilyushin Wednesday, his first meeting with an official since he was taken to hospital last Thursday after suffering a mild heart attack, a spokesman said.

"Everything is all right," the spokesman said by telephone. He gave no details of the hospital meeting, which ITAR-TASS news agency said lasted an hour.

TASS said the two men had discussed foreign and domestic policy and the mechanism of contacts between the head of state and his aides during his stay in hospital.

A Kremlin source told

TASS that the meeting showed the president "had begun active work".

Mr. Ilyushin, a trusted Yeltsin aide, was the first Kremlin official allowed by the doctors to visit the 64-year-old Russian leader in the Central Clinical Hospital. Until Wednesday only family members and security staff had visited him.

No pictures or television footage of Mr. Yeltsin have been shown since he suffered his second mild heart attack in less than four months.

He will spend five weeks recuperating and will be confined to bed until the end of this week.

Kremlin aides and doctors have issued a series of bulletins in the past two days to calm fears that they might be hiding details of his condition.

Mr. Yeltsin himself signalled he was on the road to recovery Tuesday by issuing his first official order since he was taken to hospital.

He demanded an explanation from the head of the Central Electoral Commission of why he had barred several parties or blocs, including the leading reform group Yabloko, from Russia's parliamentary election on Dec. 17.

Chechen premier: Elections not possible now

GROZNY, Russia (AP) — The prime minister of Chechnya's Moscow-installed government said Tuesday it is impossible to hold elections in the rebel republic until its economy is restored.

The statement by Mr. Zavgayev, appointed earlier this month, apparently reflected his wish to hold on to the seat despite Moscow's promises to conduct elections early next year as part of an overall peace settlement.

"It is immoral to have elections while many people are living in the base-

ments of ruined houses, without electricity and heating," Mr. Zavgayev said, according to the Interfax News Agency.

Elections cannot be held "until the republic's economy is restored," he insisted.

The 54-year-old Zavgayev succeeded

Salambek Khadzhiyev, who resigned to take up a new post in Moscow.

Mr. Khadzhiyev had grown increasingly outspoken against the rebels since his appointment by Moscow earlier this year.

Rebel negotiators accused him of hindering peace

talks, which have been bogged down for months.

Mr. Zavgayev was speaker of the Chechen legislature until it was dissolved by rebel President Dzhokhar Dudayev in April 1993. Mr. Zavgayev has insisted that the former parliament be represented in the talks.

Meanwhile, rebel attacks on Russian forces continued. The military command reported 18 such attacks Monday. One Russian serviceman was reported killed Tuesday morning in an ambush on the outskirts of Grozny, the capital.

Independence movement slams proposal for increased Polynesian autonomy

PAPEETE (AFP) — The leader of French Polynesia's largest pro-independence movement, Oscar Temaru, has slammed an autonomy proposal by the territory's chief, Gaston Flosse, calling it a "new trap."

Speaking at a press conference in Paa, Tahiti, the leader of the Tavini Huiraatira Independence Party attacked Mr. Flosse's

proposal, under which the territorial assembly would have final authority on all matters except defence, justice and security, which would remain under France's control.

Under the proposal the assembly would have the final say on such issues as fishing rights, the landing rights of international airlines and other politically sensitive questions.

Such issues are often referred to Paris but if the proposal comes into effect, laws passed by the assembly could only be changed if they have the support of two-thirds of the congress and the assembly.

Mr. Flosse and his government have said the proposal, to be debated this month in the assembly, is "indispensable" if Polynesians want real autonomy.

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Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

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Times of promise — and hard work

THE MIDDLE East and North Africa Economic Summit (MENA) which ended in Amman Wednesday represented a major step on the road to rehabilitating the economies of the region. That the summit was a success is something to which all participants have testified. And that it is only a matter of time before Jordan, and the area in general, start feeling the benefits of the policies and projects adopted at MENA is an assertion that both politicians and private sector representatives have exerted all effort possible to make the conference a success.

Jordan worked hard to ensure that the summit would realise the goals set for it. His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan exerted enormous efforts to ensure success for MENA. Their efforts stemmed from a repeatedly expressed conviction that the countries of the region have to work collectively and modernise their economies in order to bring about a better life for the people of the region. The Jordanian officialdom cooperated with the private sector in preparing for the summit. This cooperation paid off — and handsomely so.

The Kingdom won the recognition of the participants as a modern and well developed state with many achievements despite the limited resources and the numerous burdens it has had to shoulder over the years. It also succeeded in drawing the world's attention to the many opportunities that it can offer for international investors. The Kingdom's developed infrastructure, stable political environment and liberal economic and political policies will encourage foreign investors to consider doing business in Jordan. But making sure that these investors will eventually decide to commit their capital to the Jordanian market is something on which the Kingdom will have to work. MENA was a first step and the road is still long.

Our efforts in the future should focus on improving the investment environment. The legislative reforms that were recently introduced represented a significant start. But red tape, bureaucracy and inefficiency are still plaguing many of the country's institutions. These must be addressed. And so must efforts to stamp out corruption proceed with vigour and determination. These are times of promise for Jordan. But they are also times for hard work. This hard work must start immediately, for the realisation of the promise will first and foremost depend on Jordanians: government and people.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

STATEMENTS BY Israeli leaders attending the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit in Amman proved that the Israelis are not concerned with achieving comprehensive peace, said Taher Al Adwan, a columnist in Al Dustour daily. By insisting that Jerusalem is Israel's capital, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has stressed Israel's clear position with regard to the future of the city; and by claiming that Jerusalem has never been the capital of any Arab country, his foreign minister Shimon Peres has asserted that the Arabs have no right to the city, according to the writer. The Israeli delegation exploited the conference as a forum to propagate the Jewish state's political stand and project Zionism's extremism, giving the economic question a second priority, said the writer. Unlike the Europeans who offered financial assistance and used less words, the Israelis, like the Americans, talked about projects and offered no funds for their implementation, he added. For their part, the Arabs timidly whispered words about the fear of Israel's domination of the region's economies. In fact, he said, the Arabs are paving the way for the Israeli hegemony by continuing to shelve the role of the Arab League and its economic and political institutions.

A WRITER in Al Ra'i daily said regional projects like the Middle East Development Bank can only succeed and help improve the quality of life for the people in the region after a comprehensive peace has been achieved. Without including Syria and Lebanon in an overall settlement, the economic projects are bound to falter and without making the projects concretely felt by the ordinary man in the street, no projects could be described as successful, said Mahmoud Rimawi. What is needed first is a political settlement catering to the legitimate rights of all parties in implementation of U.N. resolutions before regional projects can be initiated, he added. Saying that the foreign ministers of the Russian Federation and the United States have both stressed the need for a comprehensive peace in their addresses to the MENA conference, the writer said it remains to be seen how the two sponsors of the peace process can help this aspiration to come true. The people of the Middle East, he said, aspire to the improvement of their living conditions and their countries' economies, but they more importantly aspire to the achievement of a genuine and lasting peace and the restoration of their legitimate rights.

The View from Academia

After MENA explanation of facts

THERE IS no doubt that to a careful observer, the individual sessions of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) conference (which has just concluded its work in Amman) and the media reports and comments on the said sessions say a great deal about the shape of things to come. One is certainly better acquainted now with the specific projects and plans to be soon implemented and with the potential impact of such projects and plans on the life of the peoples of the region. Much of the ambiguity has been dispelled, and many of the misconceptions and false expectations have been put in perspective.

In this respect, as in other crucial respects (the excellent planning and organisation, the quality of services and facilities available to participants, the nature and level of debates and discussions, the thorough media coverage, etc), the conference is indeed a success. Jordan has a lot to be proud of.

Nevertheless, much explanation, discussion, debate and analysis are still in order to dispel the ambiguity and scepticism and to rectify the misconceptions and false expectations which many among us still harbour. While there is no problem for the careful observer, there is a problem still for the casual listener, viewer or reader. The average citizen, the so-called man in the street, is still immensely unclear about what is going on and what is going to happen.

The average citizens, who usually form opinions and build positions on the basis of hearsay, hold two diametrically opposed views (at times simultaneously) regarding the ultimate outcome of the said conference and regarding the shape of things to come in the peace era. Some believe MENA will herald an era of great prosperity and wealth, an era which is right around the corner. Employment opportunities (especially in the private sector, which to many among us is an El Dorado) will be ample, money will be so plentiful we will virtually swim in dollars and dollars, and cars will be so cheap you won't believe it.

This is not surprising in the least, for the man in the street believes in simple maths and easy equations. If life in war or in no-war no-peace situations is harsh and uncomfortable, life in peace must be kind and comfortable.

Furthermore, the average citizen takes language literally; metaphors and similes do not make much sense. When he hears, as he has been hearing since Madrid 1990, that peace does not make sense unless "the life of the individual citizen is changed to the better dramatically," he will have to conclude that employment opportunities will be ample, money will be plentiful and cars will be cheap. Otherwise, how is peace a "blessing," a "great reward," a "big gain," etc?

By contrast, there are those citizens to whom MENA is just a show and peace is just a slogan. These people, who derive such notions and views from the pessimists, the sceptics, the cynics, the rejectionists and the nihilists among us, cling to the conviction that things will either remain as they are or get worse. In their view, the salaries will continue to be low, unemployment will remain high, taxes will increase, and the standard of living will be unsatisfactory. The logic, the rationale behind such firm conviction?

Well, most often there is no logic, and there is no rationale? In many societies, gossip and rumour have great influence on public opinion, especially in the absence or scarcity of hard facts. In a society like ours, where rumours circulate faster than fire in a field of hay, the matter is likely to be serious.

But people can also rationalise to themselves. One idea — which is false, in my opinion, or at best half-true — is that Israel is obviously (in their opinion, that is) going to reap all the benefits or most of them. Look at Egypt, they tell you: how much have the lives of ordinary Egyptians improved after the Camp David accords? There are other similar ideas and arguments.

Clearly, people who succumb or buy into this logic are either mistaken in the way they see things or victims of gossip, rumour or crooked logic. Let's remember that not long ago (even till now) many among us have inflated Israel so much that it has been turned into a giant and an incredible superman, completely blown out of proportion? Why should an Israeli be a better businessman, manager or employee than we are? Why should the hummus and falafel made in Tel Aviv be any better or tastier than those made

in Amman, if we put it in our head to make them right? Those who cite Egypt as an example to illustrate the fruitlessness of peace should ask about what Egypt has (or has not) done to improve the condition of the average Egyptian. We should not project and blame our own faults and failings on others. We may not be able to turn the Middle East and North Africa, after MENA, into Sweden or Switzerland (much of our land is desert) but we can definitely make the region more liveable and life more comfortable.

The Amman MENA summit is successful, as I have just said, because it presented, debated and assessed many of the facts which we had been looking for. Those who have followed closely are better informed now about what's going on than they had been a couple of weeks ago.

But what about those who have not followed closely? We owe it to them and to ourselves to explain and publicise the facts. Our main job in the aftermath of the Amman MENA summit is to convey to these people, through the various means at our disposal, a very precise, clear and vivid sense of what the picture looks like at the moment and what it will look like in the future.

To this end, we expect from our press and media (especially Jordan Television) to make it a priority to explain to the average citizens (through extensive interviews, reports and analyses) what has been going on, what is going on, and what will go on regarding the various projects and plans. Jordan Television (which the man in the street adores) has done an excellent job covering the conference; what it needs to do now is to spread the message more effectively and forcefully.

Citizens are like students. Some of them (a minority) get the point the minute you speak it; but for many, you need to speak it once, twice, three and four times. You need to explain, chart, drill, etc.

What happened at the Amman MENA summit is great, but if we do not explain it carefully to Jim and Jimmy, to Bill and Billy and to Khamees and Ali, we will (without being aware of it) be contributing to even more confusion and more misconceptions.

I dial therefore I am

By Thomas L. Friedman

TEL AVIV: Let's get right to the point: Israel today is a rich country.

Its per capita income is \$16,000 a year, just below that of Britain, well ahead of Spain's. Its economy is growing at 6.8 per cent a year, in a league with Asian "Tigers" like Taiwan. Intel just announced plans to build a \$1.6 billion factory here to make flash memory chips, the biggest foreign investment ever in Israel. There are more high-tech companies from Israel on the New York Stock Exchange today, almost 70, than from any foreign country other than Canada.

But nowhere is Israel's wealth more tangible than in the number of people here with mobile phones. I feel naked here. I feel poor here. I seem to be the only one in Israel without a mobile phone. Israeli paratroopers now march off to the Lebanon front armed with an Uzi and a cell phone to call home. Israeli soldiers in Lebanon order pizzas from towns in northern Israel and have them delivered at the border. An Israeli friend said his sister became worried after she figured out that her son was on a mission deep inside Lebanon. How did she

know? Her son hadn't telephoned from Lebanon for two days, which meant that he was beyond the range of his cell phone.

"The cell phone has replaced the gun as the symbol of macho and importance in Israeli society," said the Israeli political theorist Yaron Ezrahi. "In the past social status was measured by proximity to military power. Today social status is measured by proximity to economic power." In the past, he adds, soldiers went to war with a gun and a Bible. Meaning I fight for the nation. Now they go with a gun and a phone, meaning I fight for my quality of life.

How did Israel get so rich? In 1985, Israel sharply curbed its budget deficit, ending its hyperinflation. This stabilised the economy just as 600,000, often highly educated, Jews came from the former Soviet Union. In a historic decision, the Israeli government decided that instead of absorbing these new immigrants the old way — with government jobs and socialist programmes — they would restructure the economy and free up the private sector to provide the jobs. This coincided with peace with the Palestinians, which ended Israel's isolation and opened huge new markets for

Israel's high-tech industries in China, India and Japan, and the country just took off.

There is building everywhere. The centre of the city of Kfar Saba used to be a beautiful orchard. Today it's a shopping mall. Israelis are digging up orange groves in Kiryat Gat to make room for the new Intel plant. It is only a matter of time before Israel becomes an importer of oranges, the national fruit. I predict that by the year 2000, Israel will have a major party called "Green Now."

As Israel has become wealthy, the inclination to fight with the Arabs has diminished, and this is driving the peace process. Israelis just have too much to lose from more war. Last week nine Israelis were killed by Lebanese gunmen. One reason the Israeli government chose not to retaliate, and risk a border war, was because it did not want to disrupt the flourishing tourist season in northern Israel. When Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982 it was called "Operation Peace for Galilee." The recent muted response to the fighting in Lebanon was dubbed "Operation Peace for Hotel Rooms."

The Israeli government is worried that as the ring of hostility around it falls, and

Israel assimilates with its neighbours and the world, Israel's secular majority will lose its Jewish identity. While business and Asian studies classes at the Hebrew University are booming, Jewish studies enrollment has declined by 30 per cent in the last decade. Israel's Ministry of Education just asked the Hartman Institute, a modern religious education centre, to train Israeli teaching Judaism in the public schools in new ways of making Jewish values more meaningful to secular students. If survival in a hostile sea isn't going to be the bond that ties Israelis, the leadership wants to make sure Jewish values will be.

But that's not so easy. McDonald's, Tower Records, Blockbuster Video and a store called "Yuppies" all just opened on one intersection in Jerusalem. No wonder all Israeli religious parties voted against the peace process — not on security grounds but because they think it will destroy Israel's Jewish character. They do not believe that "Peace Now" and "Jewish Now" are compatible. That is the real question here.

The war with the Arabs is over. The war for Israel's identity has just begun.

The New York Times.

Look long and hard before leaping into Bosnia

By Flora Lewis

PARIS — President Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin have agreed on the principle of Russian participation in keeping the still unmade peace in Bosnia, saying that their military advisers would work out the details. But the basic political clash is in the so-called details of command responsibility, NATO's role and the understood purpose of intervention. There is not even agreement among NATO members.

France, which finally seemed to accept a compromise a few weeks ago putting its forces under NATO command but with special liaison to the United Nations, now is tilting to support Russian ideas of parallel autonomies.

This is a critical moment. There could be reasonable confidence that the many intricate practical problems of ending conflict in the Balkans could be worked out if there were an underlying convergence of policies. There is not, beyond the simple wish of getting the terrible war out of the way or at least under wraps through next year's Russian and American presidential elections.

There is a temptation to seek formulas that would paper over the issues for the moment and to hope that the rapid march of events will make them easier to solve on

the ground. That is not impossible, but it is dangerous. It could lead to making current more or less theoretical disputes among the major powers points of real contention with far-reaching consequences.

Therefore it is necessary to ask the big questions about intentions and goals of sending a large force to Bosnia now, before the quagmire effect sets in.

If they simply can't be answered, it would be better to slow down and examine the issues than rush to the appearance of agreement through gimmicks that will only add to friction.

It is not at all clear that the U.S. Congress will support a massive number of American ground forces under any conditions that Mr. Clinton might negotiate. But it is clear that U.S. forces would be sent only under NATO — that is, U.S. — command. It is equally clear that Russia will not accept NATO command, although everybody including Mr. Yeltsin agrees that it should not be left out.

One idea is to divide the operation into zones, one NATO, one Russian, one non NATO (essentially, Islamic countries) and probably one French. That is reminiscent of the postwar occupation of Germany, which hardened into 45 years of partition of both Germany and Europe.

In any case, how would they work together? The suggestion is to provide "coordination," an essentially military idea in such a relatively limited area, reminiscent of the lack of united command of U.S., French and Italian forces in Beirut of U.S., French and Italian forces in Beirut in 1982. It brought disaster even though they were NATO allies.

The U.S. Congress is seriously aggravating the issues with demands that the Americans be scheduled to pull out at the end of a year, and that meanwhile they arm and train Bosnian forces to "level the playing field" when, as many people seem to expect, the war picks up again afterward.

This had led to widely voiced suspicions that the United States is determined to back the maintenance of a Muslim state in Europe — it is also arming and training Albanians — as part of a grand Middle East strategy. That is doubtless nonsense. It is much more likely that strategy is absent than that it is invisible because hidden. The principles insist that specifics of NATO's role in Bosnia have nothing to do with the longer-term but tense issues of enlarging NATO to include Eastern Europe. But that is very much on the minds of Moscow and Paris, and another reason for them to consider

the decisions to be taken now as a risky slippery slope.

There needs to be a much clearer explanation of what the United States is seeking to achieve if any possible accord is to be based on more than the shakiest foundations.

The hypocrisy of saying America is determined to maintain the integrity of the Bosnian state with the separation plan, and all the worse with distinct zones of responsibility for intervention forces, only reinforces hostile doubts.

I think the United States must send the promised 20,000 to 25,000 men, under NATO command, or forfeit all credibility as a world leader and force for order. For Congress to renege on President Clinton's commitment would cause historic ruptures that could rival the results of President Woodrow Wilson's rebuff on the League of Nations.

But the patchy, disintegrative way the deal is shaping up could be as bad. If I were a member of Congress and it came up for approval as now foreshadowed, I would vote "no." The time for clarity of thought and clarity of presentation is now, not when hindsight has to admit that tricks didn't work as expected and grave mistakes were made.

International Herald Tribune.

LETTERS

Accolades are well deserved

To the Editor:

PLEASE ACCEPT my congratulations and those of all staff members of Zarqa Municipality on your 20th anniversary. I hope the Jordan Times will continue its march in raising the banner of independence and daring journalism, defending Jordan's causes and presenting its message to the world. We wish you more progress and success.

Dr. Mustafeh Al Fayyadh,
Mayor,
Zarqa.

I CONGRATULATE you on the Jordan Times' 20th anniversary on behalf of the staff of the Department of Press and Publications. I wish you further success and progress.

Mohammad Amin,
Director,
Department of Press and
Publications,
Amman.

I would like to place on record my congratulations to you and your colleagues in the Jordan Times on the 20th anniversary of your newspaper. Ever since my arrival in Amman, I have found the Jordan Times essential reading in my professional work as ambassador. It is a well produced newspaper with its own distinctive character. Your editorial outlook is urbane, cultivated and frequently very human. The Jordan Times thus performs a vital role in presenting to the world a worthy image of Jordan. For these reasons, you fully deserve the accolades that are being showered upon you. Best wishes and good luck for the future.

Ali Sarwar Naqvi,
Ambassador of Pakistan,
Amman.

I WISH the Jordan Times more success and progress on its 20th anniversary so that it will continue to serve our beloved Jordan under the leadership of His Majesty King Hussein.

Qasem Al Dumour,
Al Hassan Industrial
City,
Irbid.

I congratulate you on your 20th anniversary. I thoroughly enjoy reading the Jordan Times, especially its distinguished coverage of local news and international sports. The news items that I read in the Jordan Times are usually not covered by other Jordanian dailies. Keep up the good work and I wish you every success.

George S. Khoury,
Amman.

THE EDITOR and staff of the Jordan Times would like to thank the readers for the support and encouragement they offered on the newspaper's 20th anniversary. We thank all those who visited our offices, wrote letters, telephoned or sent flowers to congratulate us on the occasion. We take this opportunity to renew our commitment to serious and independent journalism and to serving our readers in the best way we can.

Linda
By Maggie Jacks
The Associated Press
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Weekender

Jordan Times, November 2, 1995

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Published every Thursday

Society on the Move

The ups and downs on the MENA sidelines

Acclaimed as a great success the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit came and went, and most of those who helped to stage the three-day event are either soaking their feet in Dead Sea bath salts or sitting somewhere contemplating if they could ever do it again. For all intents and purposes, the Amman-sponsored conference was "the best show, thematically and even structurally, and everyone feels that way," says Arab-American Institute President James Zogby, who was here for the entire event. Although orchestrated with few real dilemmas, the summit did suffer a few drawbacks, but it also showed what people can do when they genuinely team up. On the drawback side were some reported circumstances which were felt perhaps only by the media who were here to cover the packed schedule of events. Jordan Times Reporter Ayman Safadi spoke to colleagues as well as media officials at the press centre set up in Al Hussein Sports City to accommodate the needs of about 600 journalists. Most of them, he said, were disturbed by what they described as the uncooperative attitude of certain members of the press office of the World Economic Forum (WEF), the titular organisers of the summit, in dealing the legitimate needs of the media. While the Ministry of Information was responsible for the structural and operational aspects of the press centre, the responsibility of the distribution of conference documents, press releases and project proposals was that of the WEF. Because the plenary and thematic sessions of the conference, held at the Royal Cultural Centre, were closed to all but 100 foreign journalists with passes, and an additional 50 Jordanian journalists who were given the same passes by Ministry of Information Secretary General Nayef Maula, the job of some young Jordanian volunteers, said a Jordanian official, was to document the proceedings and make the texts available to the remaining 500 or so journalists. But, even with all that help, journalists still complained of long delays in obtaining press releases and other materials being issued on the various MENA activities. Equally perturbing was an incident in which a group of British journalists said they were stuck at their hotel Friday and part of Saturday because the press passes that they had applied for in advance through the WEF offices in Geneva were still not prepared. By the time the dust settled on Wednesday an official of one international organisation in Amman said essential documents, whose distribution was the responsibility of the WEF, particularly copies of the project proposals, were still unavailable. The first efforts by the Jordan Times to obtain a comment from a WEF representative were futile as she refused to saying anything. Attempts Wednesday to contact Gregory Blatt, who was in charge of the WEF press office, also failed as he had checked out of his hotel early and was headed for the airport. But commenting from the official Jordanian side on the performance of the WEF, whose business by the way is conference planning, Secretary General Maula said, the ministry has the expertise and experience to handle the press side of such an event, "we could have done the job without the help of anybody."

ROAD BLOCKS & BLACK BRIEFCASES: Putting his own complaint in writing, Al Ra'i columnist Sultan Hattab published a piece the day after the summit concluded, in which he said he hoped that the "suffering" of the people who were forced to use detours through Amman during the summit "will not be repeated." Hattab thanked God that the summit lasted no longer than three days and that it was a "once-in-a-lifetime" happening and not a seasonal occurrence. But what he harped on was what he described as the inequitable treatment of Jordanian journalists. "We were hoping as Jordanian journalists to be treated as counterparts coming from the Caribbean, Belgium, Poland or China." As journalists who have attended more than a few international conferences, Hattab wrote, "we became accustomed to equal treatment." He complained that the "killing detours were consuming our

time and wrecking our nerves" saying that the press badges were useless and did not allow him and his Jordanian colleagues to pass through the road blocks. He protested that the "luxury facilities of conference halls, communications and other services" were not as easily made available to the Jordanian contingent of journalists, "as was the case for the foreigners." But perhaps what most disturbed Hattab, was that despite, as he said, the many attempts by himself and some of his colleagues to obtain the much coveted black briefcase containing press material, he never did get hold of one. He said many of these briefcases made it into the hands of other Arab and foreign journalists, and even persons who were not journalists. But his was not a column of total protestation. Hattab ended saying "We love our country and any measure taken by it to succeed, and find that the conference was a great achievement and source of pride for us in terms of preparation and management. He also commended the Crown Prince for his "exemplary" role in his interviews, debates, and directives while serving as chairman of the summit.

THE MOTHER OF ALL GRAMMARIANS? You may remember the Ad Dustour ghost writer Sahban-turned-Halim, better known as Fakri Kaway, the president of the General Union of Arab Writers. In three short paragraphs "Halim" blasted the quality of simultaneous translations at the MENA summit. According to the writer, Sibawieh, the father of Arab grammar, "must have been turning in his grave at the inferior pronunciation and the complete ignorance of basic Arabic grammar," as demonstrated by the translators, who, by the way, were selected by the WEF.

MIXING BUSINESS & PLEASURE: While the press may have had a tough time of it, the MENA participants not only applauded the business edge of the summit but the hospitality of their Jordanian colleagues. Visiting businesspersons attending the summit were

treated to a lavish dinner replete with entertainment selected to reflect the "face of Jordan." Actually, two dinners were hosted simultaneously at the Philadelphia and InterContinental hotels. The big hosts were prominent businessmen Jad Magdah, chairman of the board of CJC, the shirtmakers, and Thabit Taher, former minister of energy and chairman of the private sector committee entrusted with preparing for MENA. On the programme were skit performances by Hisham Younis and Nabil Sawalha of the Hisham & Nabil Theatre which "surprised and delighted the audiences," dances by the Circassian folkloric troupe of the New Gil, traditional dabkeh performed by 23 dancers and musicians from the Royal Jordanian Airlines (RJ) Folklore troupe, and a fashion show of modern and traditional apparel. The shows and art direction were the celebrated talents of Bassam Sheikh Jawad who probably deserves the largest round of applause for staging, at two venues mind you, what was described by guests and officials alike as a superb evening. Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdul-

The 'message' was there all the time While some of us were labouring over the hidden meaning, if any, behind HRH Crown Prince Hassan's globalisation message to the Jordan Times on the occasion of its 20th anniversary, others were savouring the sweet delights the Crown Prince had sent to our offices. In the meantime, somehow another note from Their Highnesses Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath, which had been attached to the box of sweets, mysteriously appeared days later. In it were salutations and good wishes for the years to come. The message (written in Arabic) read, "We congratulate you and the members of your staff on the passing of 20 years since you started your efforts and labour in making Jordan's message clear and honest." The moral of the story is that all that pondering and soul-searching could have been avoided had someone with sticky fingers just let that little note be. Nonetheless it was an exercise of the mind and the good wishes were indeed appreciated — so too were the sweets.

STROLLING SHMEISANI- No sooner was the summit over than shopkeepers and café owners in Shmeisani were surprised by the sight of a man strolling by with perhaps more security than some other important people in Jordan. The man was none other than Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who, accompanied by Israeli Ambassador to Jordan, Shimon Shamir, took a "long walk" through Shmeisani, from the Forte Grand Hotel through the shopping district and back to the hotel. In those 45 minutes, Mr. Peres stopped at several cafés for refreshments, ate a shawarmah sandwich at a sidewalk stand, and even took in a smoke on an argileh at one of Shmeisani's many bubbly establishments. But that last experience may have been a bit too 'heady' for the former smoker. Mr. Peres was quoted by the Associated Press Wednesday as saying that he had been a heavy smoker. "I haven't smoked for eight years," he said after nearly choking. Several shopowners, closed their shops to run out and meet Mr. Peres. The foreign minister stopped to chat with many of the folks he met and asked them about their jobs, the economy and whether they felt peace would make a positive difference in their lives. With schoolchildren, Mr. Peres asked about their studies. According to Ambassador Shamir, Mr. Peres was very warmly received all along his way through the streets of Shmeisani. Needless to say Mr. Peres experienced some typical Jordanian hospitality, and his tab was naturally, on-the-house.

REPORT ON THE RAPORTEUR: It is rare that bringing together high ranking foreign officials, more than 1,000 participants, 600 journalists, and other personnel, not to mention the human resources required by Jordan, for an event such as Amman has never seen, would run through without a casualty. The unfortunate



Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres nearly chokes after a puff from an argileh in a café in the Shmeisani district of Amman. Mr. Shamir said he had quit smoking eight years ago (photo by Yusef Al-Ali)

but thankfully not critical mishap occurred on the last day of the summit. Amman Financial Market Director Ummayya Tougan, who was the MENA summit's rapporteur, took a fall and injured a ligament in his ankle. We hear he is recuperating well at home, and we wish him a speedy return to his work at the stock exchange.

COMMENDATIONS IN ORDER: Last but not least, officials saluted the volunteers in the operations room at the Amman Financial Market and at the RCC, saying that it was truly heartening to see such young people pool together with dynamism and potential to get a job done. Many attendees to the summit were also quite impressed at the politeness of the security people, in and around the conference venues, saying that they should be commended because their helpful attitude during these three days, particularly that of the uniformed officers, "made a big difference." One more mention should go to the Raneen Advertising Company whose logo was selected among those submitted by several countries to be the official MENA '95 logo. Raneen General Manager Hassan Keilani, 24, son of Advisor to His Majesty King Hussein Mohammad Rasoul Keilani, recieved a letter of thanks from Yanal Hikmat, the official supervisor of the summit, who praised Raneen's designs as distinguished and reflecting the modernity of the Kingdom.

Jennifer Hamarneh

Linda McCartney turns veggie crusade into growing food empire

By Maggie Jackson
The Associated press

NEW YORK — Linda McCartney settles her jeans-clad self into a plush sofa in a \$600-a-night hotel suite, kicks off black rubber thongs and wiggles two bare feet with cherry red toenails. "Let's relax," she says to a visitor, her voice a throaty blend of English and American accents. "Let's just relax." Linda Eastman McCartney, the woman who married the cutest Beatle and has been dogged by detractors ever since, is clearly enjoying herself. With a multimillion-dollar cookbook and food empire built around her crusade for vegetarianism, she's found a new — and gender — place in the spotlight. Her first cookbook, published in 1989, has sold 400,000 copies worldwide and publishers fought over rights to her second, published this month. Nearly 160 million meatless

frozen meals bearing her name have been sold. She's even attached her name to vegetarian dog food. Yes, dog food. She's quick to admit the McCartney name surely helped. But only at first, she insists. "In the beginning, the McCartney name was it," she said in an interview punctuated by the fussings of a hairdresser, a daughter and a bevy of publicists. "But as someone said in the food business, they'll try your product once, and if it doesn't taste good, they don't come back." Still, like a child receiving an unexpected treat, she also seems genuinely surprised by her success and the public adulation that has come with it. "It's great," says McCartney. "I'll go to the theatre, to the junk shop and I'll always have one or two people say to me, 'Linda, love your (meatless) sausages'. 'Linda, love your cookbooks'." A quarter-century ago,

when a 27-year-old American rock-and-roll photographer married the adorable Beatle Paul, the reception was far less warm. Some fans were so upset by the sacrilege that they broke into the couple's house and ransacked Linda's things. "The first rule is that no one should marry a Beatle, and at that time he was the only remaining bachelor Beatle," says Geoff Baker, a spokesman for the McCartneys. "She got a lot of flak." Later, she drew withering criticism for playing keyboard in Paul's band Wings despite a lack of musical experience and — so critics said — talent. A pirated tape of Wings playing Hey Jude in concert, in which all but Linda's off-key warbles are blocked out, has popped up for years. "When people had that Hey Jude tape, she just sat there crying in front of me, saying 'Why are they doing this?'" says Baker, who adds that Linda prob-

ably draws extra fire in Britain for being outspoken and American. Even her longtime photography work draws biting criticism. "She's not a bad photographer, she's serious and active," says Miles Barth, a curator at the International Centre of Photography in New York City. "But she probably wouldn't have achieved the exhibitions and books that she has if she wasn't married to Paul McCartney."

McCartney at first looks uncomfortable when asked about the vitriol that is ebbing but still directed her way for her causes and ventures, her outspokenness and flower child talk. Yet when Baker interjects that she's no longer criticised and tries to halt the interview, she quickly cuts him short. "No, it is true," says McCartney, whose angular face, earthy manner and blonde locks make her look at least a decade younger than her 54 years.

Recently, the company opened a \$16 million factory in England devoted to her products, each of which is personally approved by McCartney. When the meals hit the United States last year, reviews were mixed, at best calling them "hearty and filling" and at worst "bland on the run," a play on the Wings hit Band On The Run. Yet 10 million meals — from Tex-Mex Tostada to Spaghetti Milano — have been gobbled in U.S. test markets, and the line has just debuted in Holland. This year, as well, British dogs began finding McCartney-approved vegetarian fodder in their bowls. Her fare undoubtedly came along at the right time. Spurred by health concerns, growing numbers of Americans and Britons are forsaking meat, at least as a daily necessity. Vegetarian cooking — including McCartney's — also has

been spiced up since the days when it revolved around brown rice and cheese. To answer consumer demands, McCartney lately has tried to reduce the fat and salt in her products and recipes. The British maker of her veggie burgers recently jumped to recall stocks after a report said they contained twice as much fat as listed on the package. Still, it's not health concerns that drive McCartney, a tireless — sometimes tiresome — crusader against meat-eating for one reason: Saving animals. "To think, we rear an animal and we befriend it, and we send it off to be murdered," she says. "And they scream and they watch their children being murdered and they watch their aunts and uncles being murdered and all their relatives and then we eat that fear." McCartney, who converted to vegetarianism along with Paul more than

20 years ago after watching lambs gambol on their Scottish farm, peppers her talk with such tirades, calling meat "dead flesh" and leather "animal skin." Just as energetically, she tucks in a plea for boycotting French cheese to protest nuclear explosions or an exultation on simple living. "Sit me in a field. Put me out on a horse. ... I just love that." It would sound like a put-on, were it not so sincere. After all, here is a woman who has multi-millions and every chance for an ultra-jet set life, yet chose to raise four children in a two-bedroom home without a nanny or cook. By many accounts, she's surprisingly unpretentious. "I like natural living, if I'm only going to live once," she says. "I want to feel alive. I don't want to be totally afraid, and I think having all the trappings makes you feel dead." "By the way, have you thought of going veggie?"

Fun, Fun, Fun

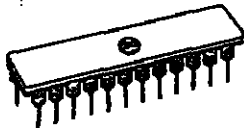
By Jean-Claude Elias

Last week I saw the light. I suddenly understood why PCs in general and Microsoft in particular have had such tremendous success and have created a true revolution in the world of computing. I mean the real reason, not the technical characteristics or features. What produced the spark was the song I was listening to — "Fun, Fun, Fun," the Beach Boys famous hit, back in 1964 — while I was using my PC, adjusting the colours of an Excel chart to give it maximum visual impact.

The main duty of those who design tools, machines, software, objects, clothes, etc., is to give them functionality. Since mankind is well-past the Iron Age, functionality is not enough anymore. To attract the clients and beat the competition, designers have learned to add a certain dose of embellishment to their products. A car, originally a machine made to let you travel from one place to another, has become a second home. With all the comforts built in modern vehicles, driving a car — barring traffic lights — has become a pleasure, not just a necessity. Being in control of a fast car, sitting behind a power steering wheel, listening to Chopin waltzes on the car's CD player is fun, great fun.

Most software publishers have successfully implemented the idea. Sophisticated computer games are but the ultimate form of fun computing, albeit with little utility. However, Microsoft Windows system has taken the art of mixing work with pleasure to unprecedented heights. Take Excel spreadsheet programme for example. Type in a few

chip talk



people's names with some data next to them, like their age, click the mouse on the chart icon, select the area containing the data on the screen with the mouse, drag and drop and you have a complete, well presented colour chart in less than 10 seconds. If this isn't fun then what is?

Fun with software was considered as an added value to serious work, now it is what makes you feel like working. From secondary it has become the prime reason. The way Windows and related software put the user in control of all functions gives him or her a genuine feel of power and enjoyment. Some people admit that they "get their kicks" by using PCs.

One of the brochures I collected earlier this week at METS 95 (Jordan's computer and technology show) rightfully introduces new software as having "More Power, More Freedom, More Fun." If "Fun, Fun, Fun" was about surfing in California, computing under Windows is like a dream ride on the waves of software.

Toys for the boys

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen

Today — a grand test your knowledge quiz! Yes, your chance to show just how much you know about the place where you live and the people you share it with. Here we go then!

1. Do you know of any study that could tell you for sure whether poverty, if it can at all be measured, has actually gone up or down in the areas where you live?
2. In what circumstances can you imagine yourself needing such a study in the first place?
3. Would you, for example, need to use it while preparing a list of development projects for the millennium celebrations in your country?
4. Do you think that you would have been asked to lend a helping hand in your field of specialisation as part of the preparations for an economic summit if you were:
 - a) able to communicate with others in four different languages.
 - b) able to communicate with others in three different languages.
 - c) able to communicate with others in two languages.
 - d) able to speak only one language, your mother tongue.
5. Well, when do you think that you would have been asked?
6. Some economists and think-tanks are by now household names. These have become famous for saying that "nobody promised us the cure to all our ills". Should these people now expect to get a cheer from the ordinary people who had every right to have had very high expectations?
7. The idea of writing and putting pen to paper, to point out some of the problems and dilemmas in the way we design and build things, plan our roads, structure our economy, invest in our heritage and culture and in our future generations, is, in itself, just an idea. But can you

- think of anything good that would come out of it?
8. Can you think of anything at all that would come out of it?
 9. Could you say that there are enough hotel rooms available in your city for all the guests of an economic summit?
 10. If there aren't, which of these possible scenarios would you think could be the most likely to happen:
 - a) vacant apartments would be rented out, pushing prices up.
 - b) apartments would be bought to that end, pushing prices up.
 - c) other arrangements would be made involving using the facilities of friendly neighbouring countries.
 11. How many of our university and college students would you say have access to the latest titles and most recent publications in the fields of pure sciences, the arts or the humanities?
 12. How many, of those students, would you say have access to the latest technologies, such as computer hardware and software, at their places of study?
 13. Is the model of the economic relationship of the United States with Latin America an acceptable one for the Middle East where one country would be the dominating power?
 14. Why do cities such as Salt have as big a traffic problem as Amman when there aren't as many cars there?
 15. And why are one-way streets in such a throbbing and vibrant city, a matter of public knowledge, irrespective of sign-posting?
 16. If a commission charged with gathering money for a series of projects celebrating the millennium is set up, would you have any specific ideas as to where and how that money would be best invested?

How many of these questions do you think you got right? If you think you got all of them right — well done! If not, well, that is another story.

JTV CHANNEL TWO WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, Nov. 2, 1995

- 1:00 Iris - The Happy Professor
- 1:20 Fireman Sam
- 1:30 My Secret Identity
- 2:00 Mountain Men
- 3:00 The New Leave It to Beaver
- 3:30 Gillette World Sport
- 4:00 White Heat
- 5:00 French Programme
- 5:30 Varieties And Game Show
- 7:00 Le Journal
- 7:15 Magazine
- 7:30 News Headlines
- 7:35 National Geographic
- 8:15 The Album Show
- 9:10 The New Avengers
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 Movie — Coogan's Bluff
- 11:50 The Thorn Birds

- 7:15 Magazine
- 7:30 Sports Et Musique
- 7:35 News Headlines
- 8:00 Cinema, Cinema
- 8:25 The Bold And The Beautiful
- 9:10 Futures
- 9:30 Heartbeat
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 Counter Strike
- 11:10 Cassidy
- 12:30 My Two Wives

Monday, Nov. 6, 1995

- 2:00 Shelley Duvall's Bed Time Stories
- 2:30 Play About
- 2:45 Hey Dad
- 3:00 Nature World Of Mistoaki
- 4:00 I Love Lucy
- 4:30 Tarzan
- 5:00 French Programme
- 5:30 Cocotte Minute
- 5:30 Serie
- 7:00 Maria Vandamme
- 7:00 Le Journal
- 7:15 Magazine
- 7:30 News Headlines
- 7:35 McHale's Navy
- 8:00 Inventions
- 8:30 The Bold And The Beautiful
- 9:10 Star Trek
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 Inspector Morse
- 12:30 American Chart Show

Tuesday, Nov. 7, 1995

- 2:00 Captain Planet
- 2:30 M.A.N.T.I.S
- 3:15 To Run The Gannet
- 4:00 I Love Lucy
- 4:30 Tarzan
- 5:00 French Programme
- 5:30 Cocotte Minute
- 5:30 Serie
- 6:00 Fruits Et Legumes
- 6:00 Magazine
- 7:00 Le Journal
- 7:15 Magazine
- 7:30 Ushuaia
- 7:30 News Headlines
- 7:35 You Bet Your Life
- 8:00 The Secrets Of Treasure Islands
- 8:30 The Bold And The Beautiful
- 9:10 True Blue
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:30 Movie: "Murderous Affairs"
- 12:00 Mancy Wake

Wednesday, Nov. 8, 1995

- 2:00 Inspector Gadget
- 2:30 Ghost Writers
- 3:00 Tomorrow's World
- 3:30 Amazing Stories
- 4:00 I Love Lucy
- 4:30 Tarzan
- 5:00 French Programme
- 5:30 Cocotte Minute
- 5:30 Jeux
- 6:00 Pago Pago
- 7:00 Le Journal
- 7:15 Magazine
- 7:30 Sports Et Musique
- 7:35 News Headlines
- 7:35 Anything For A Laugh
- 8:00 Amazing Races
- 8:30 The Bold And The Beautiful
- 9:10 Star Trek
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 Prism
- 10:45 Law And Order
- 11:40 The Silk Road
- 12:30 Second Thoughts

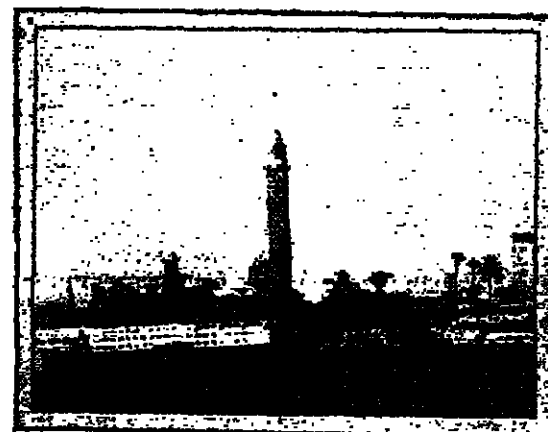
Sunday, Nov. 5, 1995

- 2:00 The Flintstones
- 2:30 Joshua Jones
- 2:45 Droopy Master Detective
- 3:10 Family Playhouse
- 3:30 Scientific Eye
- 3:50 Puywall's Summer
- 4:00 I Love Lucy
- 4:30 Tarzan
- 5:00 French Programme
- 5:30 Cocotte Minute
- 5:30 Serie
- 6:00 Fruits Et Legumes
- 6:00 Document
- 6:00 La Multinational
- 7:00 Le Journal

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Mohammad A. Shuqair

FOCUS



The River Nile

- A great river in Africa. Nearly 4,150 miles long.
- Considered the world's longest river.
- Fed by Blue and white Niles.
- Rises in Lake Victoria and flows north to the Mediterranean Sea.
- Fertile silt-laden flood waters basis of ancient Egyptian economy.
- Exploited jointly with Egypt and the Sudan.
- Dams (e.g. the High Dam) have been built across the Nile to store up its water.

attribute my longevity to the persistent use of garlic. Now don't breathe that to a soul."

SON: "The secret or the garlic?"



TEACHER: "Big objects never move easily."

PUPIL: "Not always, sir."

TEACHER: "How?"

PUPIL: "Just put a banana peel in a big man's way and see how he rolls so easily!"

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

- How long have they been married?

Kam mada ala zawajihima?
- Twenty years.

Ishreena sana.
- Have they ever quarrelled?

Hal sabaqa wa'an tashajaraa?
- Very often.

Miraran watikrararn.
- Do you know why?

Hal ta'rif as'sabab?
- Her husband takes to gambling.

Le'anna zawjaha muqamir.

JOKES

* HE: "They tell me Colonel Lively is a sexagenarian."

SHE: "The old fool" and at his age, too!"

* SON: "Well, dad, you've managed to live to a ripe old age. How did you manage to keep the germs of disease away all these many years?"

FATHER: "I'll let you in on a little secret, son, I

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. Define the following:

- a) Oligarchy
- b) Plutocracy
- c) Hagocracy
- d) Kakistocracy
- e) Statocracy

2. Name the sounds produced by these birds or animals:

- | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| a) ducks | b) bigs | c) mice | d) doves |
| e) owls | f) turkey | g) Hogs | h) bulls |
| i) roosters | j) seals | k) horses | l) crows |
| m) cows | n) hens | | |

PUZZLES

* THE MISSING VOWEL

Can you make sense of the following by inserting the same vowel twelve times?

— MBBNGGNLLNNOSSLLCT.

Biggest maker of 'bionic ears' to float

SYDNEY (R) — The world's largest manufacturer of "bionic ears", Cochlear Ltd., is to be floated and its parent hopes to raise up to Australian dollars 125 million (\$94.5 million).

Industrial conglomerate Pacific Dunlop Ltd said that the flotation would improve Cochlear's ability to grow.

Cochlear is being floated out of Nucleus Ltd, Pacific Dunlop's medical equip-

ment group which also owns Pacemaker and Leads Business Electronic Pacing Systems Inc.

Cochlear controls 85 per cent of the world market for recipients of Cochlear implants. The implants are designed to improve the communication ability of the deaf, who derive little benefit from hearing aids.

Penington, Cochlear's chairman.

Cochlear exports to 48 countries, mainly Europe, the United States, Japan and Australia, and has a developing presence in Eastern Europe, South America and China. The company's main competitors are U.S. firm Advanced Bionics Corp and Austrian-based company Med El.



Sigourney Weaver

Sigourney Weaver — no longer a heroine addict

By Douglas J. Rowe
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — To some, she's still ripe. It still amazes Sigourney Weaver that when she meets people, that's the first role of hers so many cite.

There's no denying that the part of a sexy, sweaty, 6-foot (1.8-metre) woman wielding a flame-thrower to blast a slimy evil creature into outer space is a memorable one.

That's probably why Weaver herself can say in a matter-of-fact tone rather than a resigned one: "I'm sure I'm already typecast in a lot of people's minds."

But even though she reprised her first major film role, 1979's *Alien*, with two sequels (1986's *Aliens* and 1992's *Alien 3*), her career can be characterized as varied, even distinguished.

The 46-year-old actress has appeared in the *Ghostbusters* comedies, *The Year Of Living Dangerously* and Roman Polanski's film adaptation of *Death And The Maiden*.

She received a best-actress Academy Award nomination for *Aliens*, then two Oscars nominations in one year — best actress for *Gorillas In The Mist* and best supporting actress for *Working Girl*, both 1988 releases.

It's true, in most of her roles, she's a straight-ahead, stalwart type. But in Polanski's film and her latest, *Copycat*, in which she plays a criminal psychologist who has a nervous breakdown, she appears to be giving up her addiction to heroine roles.

The film's Helen Hudson, who's transformed into a pill-popper suffering from agoraphobia induced by one of the serial killers she's studying, certainly won't be confused with ripley.

She's housebound and easily petrified. Months after the attack that decimated her, she reluctantly agrees to help a detective (played by Holly Hunter) who's determined to solve the latest serial killer case. (His pattern is to replicate, in turn, a murder by famous serial killers such as the Boston

Strangler and Ted Bundy)

While trying to range widely with her roles, only recently would Weaver allow that her career is not riddled with doubts. There was a time when she would suggest someone for a certain part over herself, once saying: "I think I get sent the roles Meryl (Streep) is not doing."

Even with *Copycat*, she said, a few other actresses were lined up before her, but they opted out for whatever reasons.

"I think at that point I didn't offer any better people," she said, chuckling, in a recent interview in a Manhattan hotel suite. "The roles are not that plentiful."

"I always used to do that. I used to go in and say: 'you know who would really be great in this part?' ... I would always give them someone else. I couldn't stop myself. It was, I think, probably the producer in me that I could see it cast. And sometimes part of it was just I was intimidated."

Like when the part of Dian Fossey came up in *Gorillas In The Mist*. She proposed Diane Keaton and Vanessa Redgrave.

"It took me a while to take on the big parts," Weaver said. "I'm used to playing straightforward people. And when the characters are very complex, I don't know that I felt I had enough training, in a way, to be able to tell their stories. But now I've learned so much over the years that now I feel capable of showing a lot different sides of people."

Weaver — who lives in New York with her husband, theatre director Jim Simpson and their young daughter, Charlotte — still tends to agonize over her work. But now that she has more experience, she said she realizes "the important thing is to play the character. In other words, you try to leave yourself alone. You get out of your own way. You know, just let your talents and your training do it."

Now there's a phrase for the 1990s: just do it. Yet, that "it" hasn't included many comedies or romantic leads. "It's amazing to me

that I haven't done more comedy. It's the one thing I think I'm really good at it," she said, revealing that next year she'll appear in a new comedic play by old pal Christopher Durang.

"I think love stories are the most fun film you can do. I always end up playing these ultraserious people."

She's turned down a lot of comedies because she says there aren't that many great comedic roles and scripts for women, and the right directors to handle them.

"There are a lot of things that, I think, you can get away with in a normal film. But a comedy really has to be this soufflé," she said.

She figures that she's only been in a few really nice romantic films because studio heads probably don't think of a tall woman like her for a conventional love story. "It has to be a sort of weird love story," for her to be tabbed, she suggested.

"If I had my choice I would do nothing but romantic comedies," she said.

So what's she doing next?

"You know, I never have a plan. I never have a goal," said Weaver, the daughter of Sylvester "Pat" Weaver, a long-ago president of the NBC Broadcast Network, and Elizabeth Inglis, an actress who appeared in *The 39 Steps*.

"I just think in this business it's much better to sort of keep doing your work and see what comes up. ... I don't believe in going after roles. First of all, I never get them. But also I guess I just feel very philosophical about things that come to you."

Billie Whitelaw, devoted muse to Beckett

By Paul Majendie
Reuter

LONDON — As muse to playwright Samuel Beckett, actress Billie Whitelaw felt like clay in the hands of a great sculptor.

As leading lady to Laurence Olivier, she watched a master technician who held back from pouring his soul into roles.

The contrast could not be more stark and Whitelaw bluntly compares them in an autobiography spanning 50 years as one of Britain's leading actresses.

She rose from child star to sex symbol of gritty "kitchen sink" dramas. Co-stars ranged from Albert Finney to Elizabeth Taylor, directors from John Ford to Alfred Hitchcock.

But Beckett was always her greatest inspiration. She cemented her place in theatrical history collaborating with Irish-born Beckett over a quarter of a century.

She was the voice and face of the Nobel Prize winner's complex plays.

"We would sit opposite each other and speak the words in unison, he in a whisper and me out loud while we conducted each other, eyeball to eyeball, his face changing expression with each phrase, just like a conductor."

"Sometimes I felt as if he was a sculptor and I a piece of clay."

They instinctively understood each other. The death in 1989 of the soft-spoken playwright with the pale blue eyes had a devastating effect on Whitelaw.

"It was never difficult for me to understand what Beckett wrote because it always seemed to be about me," she writes in her autobiography, *Billie Whitelaw ... Who He?*

"Who He, I said filing away, and what it?" was a line from Beckett's *Play*, their first together in 1963.

Beckett's plays have baffled, moved and riveted the



Billie Whitelaw

regulators included Rudolph Valentino, W.C. Fields, Gloria Swanson and the Marx Brothers, who would film during the day and hop back across the East River into Manhattan to do Broadway at night.

The complex was taken over by the U.S. army in 1942 for military films and was unused during part of the 1970s. But it's since been reborn with stars such as Harrison Ford, Diane Keaton and Hume Cronyn and directors including Woody Allen and Sidney Lumet working out of its mammoth spaces.

"It's the closest thing to L.A. studios," says Hal Rosenbluth, the president and chief operating officer of Kaufman Astoria Studios, referring to Los Angeles. "But there's better synergy because of New York."

Its advertising slogans tout it "as slightly east of L.A." and emphasise it's New Yorkness: "You can't compare shooting in N.Y. to Hollywood. We've got better bagels."

Slogans aside, Rosenbluth emphasises the deep talent well in the city and the fact that Astoria "is a nice quiet neighbourhood" a subway ride away from the hustle of

Manhattan.

"People like coming here," he said. "They say it's like going to the country."

The facility blends into its working-class industrial neighbourhood like the Corner Deli. Frances Poplawski, who has lived nearby for 44 years, says the studio's presence causes little stir.

The Cosby Show used to draw spectators when the television show taped there from 1987 to 1992, she recalls, but for the most part, "if it weren't for the fact I knew it was there, you wouldn't know."

The complex was first constructed in 1920 by famous players lasky corp., run by Adolph Zukor and Jesse Lasky. It took the name of the distributor, Paramount, in 1927.

Feature films were produced throughout the 1920s and 1930s, including silent versions of *The Great Gatsby* and *Monsieur Gainsbourg*; the first Marx brothers film, *The Cocoanuts* and their classic, *Animal Crackers*; *The Emperor Jones*, starring Paul Robeson; and Bob Hope's debut film, *The Big Broadcast Of 1938*.

When the army took over the facility in 1942 it renamed it the Signal Corps Photographic Centre. Training and propaganda

colour," a coded plea for a more naturalistic approach. Olivier is often lauded as Britain's greatest actor. Whitelaw played Desdemona to his Othello in the Shakespearean tragedy hailed as one of his greatest roles.

Rehearsing for *Footfalls*, she asked of her character:

"Am I dead?" Beckett replied: "Well, let's say you are not quite there."

He was meticulous about stage directions. Beckett once told her that three "pause" dots on one page should be cut to two. "He kept telling her 'too much colour, too! much

colour," a coded plea for a more naturalistic approach. Olivier is often lauded as Britain's greatest actor. Whitelaw played Desdemona to his Othello in the Shakespearean tragedy hailed as one of his greatest roles.

She praises a professional

who inspired hero worship. Playing before Leonid Brezhnev in Moscow, they were given a 25-minute ovation by the Kremlin leader and his politburo.

But she felt there was always something missing.

"He was technically so polished that his performance shone like a diamond. Yet I couldn't help thinking that he wasn't personally involved," she says of Olivier.

He was even charming when sacking fellow thespians at Britain's pioneering National Theatre.

Olivier told Whitelaw: "We simply have nothing suitable to offer you, nothing that is worthy of you. I think you should now extend your career and expand your talent. It's been marvellous working with you."

Whitelaw, a wartime child whose father died of cancer, has not had an easy life. Her son Matthew nearly died of meningitis, her husband, writer Robert Muller, was almost killed by a heart attack.

She admits calmly contemplating suicide as five-year-old Matthew lay in hospital on the verge of death.

"In a quite practical unemotional way, I thought it would be better if I went with him in case he got lost if he died...He'd be too little to manage on his own."

At 62, Whitelaw is as busy as ever, including lecture stints across the United States explaining to students the enigma of Beckett.

Her sense of loss is acute as ever. "Sam's death to me was like an amputation."

Writing her autobiography has clearly been a cathartic exercise. She ends by penning her own epitaph: "When I have had enough of my own life, I want to go with a jar of valium and a magnum of champagne. I don't consider it a sin to commit suicide."

That was different," he said.

High costs kept many producers from filming in the city for years. KAS has attracted work by providing so much in one place, managing to work deals with industry unions and selling the resurgence of New York itself.

Then latter is "the polish on the apple," says Rosenbluth.

His cluttered office in no way suggests the image of a Hollywood mogul: It's small, looks onto some old row houses and is filled with pictures of his family. He has made the studio profitable by diversification, adding a new lighting division and a new set construction shop for productions requiring sets for location shoots.

People who work there like the location. "My guys don't like having to go into the city all the time," says Frank Schultz, president of local 52 of studio mechanics, which represents handlers, grips and others. "It's close to the subway and the area's nice."

Says Rosenbluth, "we try to take the high road here. It's a first-class facility where people work. We're not trying to turn it into something it isn't. And we hope to be here another 75 years."

75 years of filmmaking — in the Astoria section of New York City

By Marlene Aig
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — On the biggest stage at Kaufman Astoria Studios, designers have re-created a Florida trailer park, complete with palm trees, for the filming of Marvin's Room with Robert De Niro and Meryl Streep.

Nearby are fake Mexican ruins that were put together for *The Juror* with Demi Moore and Alec Baldwin. That mammoth set is being saved for the moment, in case final location filming in Mexico doesn't work out.

On stage H, Big Bird and Ruth Buzzi are taping a segment of *Sesame Street*. It's another busy day at the studio complex in the New York borough of Queens, marking its 75th anniversary this year.

The saga of the sprawling film studio in the quiet Astoria neighbourhood is a minimeleodrama — it started with great success, fell into oblivion and has since staged a stirring comeback.

Bill Neff, a college film professor who grew up in the neighbourhood in the 1940s, says, "everyone called it 'the big house' back then. It was big."

With six stages, a radio station, a cable TV station, a recording studio and production and support facilities ranging from deluxe

Manhattan.

"People like coming here," he said. "They say it's like going to the country."

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When the army took over the facility in 1942 it renamed it the Signal Corps Photographic Centre. Training and propaganda

films were produced during World War II and the cold war years.

After the army gave up the facility in 1970, the city acquired ownership and the complex was briefly used by a local community college.

A non-profit foundation took over in 1976 and, in 1977, the big stage, stage "E," which at 26,000 square feet is one of the largest outside of Hollywood, was used to film *The Wiz*.

Real estate developer George S. Kaufman was given the go-ahead by the city to renovate, expand and revive the landmark in 1980 and KAS was formally created.

Kaufman expanded the space to 15 acres (6 hectares), developed the multimedia facility and created the American museum of the moving image within the complex to preserve movie history.

The walls of the studio are lined with posters from movies made there since it reopened: *Carlito's Way*, *Scent Of A Woman*, *Age Of Innocence*, *Scenes From A Marriage*, *The Verdict* and a host of Woody Allen films.

Rosenbluth likes the irony of director Nora Ephron recreating Venice, California, on the big stage for her movie *Mixed Nuts* rather than filming it in California.

Identity crisis for African filmmakers

By Bryan Pearson
Agence France Presse

JOHANNESBURG — Film producers and directors across Africa are facing an identity crisis as tastes change towards Hollywood-style action movies threaten the continent's long tradition of "liberation" film-making.

At a recent seminar here,

some of Africa's most respected film-makers were told by their younger colleagues to stop bemoaning the fact that 99 per cent of movies shown on the continent originate from Hollywood and to start making movies that Africans will pay to see.

Tunisian producer Ahmad Amia opened the seminar by complaining that govern-

ment subsidies in his country had been cut back from 20 per cent to 10 per cent of production costs.

Only funding by the French and Italian governments and the European Union keep the industry afloat, he said.

Egyptian director Youssi Nasrallah blamed Egyptian nationalisation of the industry for the fact that only 15

to 20 movies a year are being made there compared to the 200 produced annually in the 1950s and 1960s.

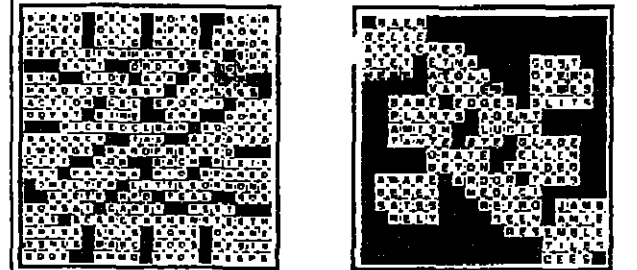
"We have a crisis," he said.

For one of Africa's most famous filmmakers, Djibril Diop Mambety of Senegal, the answer to the crisis is dubbing.

"Dubbing — into English, French and Portuguese — is

very crucial for distribution," Mambety said.

He forecast that dubbing will help overcome the lack of marketability of U.S. films, a problem the industry has endured since 1963, when Senegal's Ousmane Sembene made "Borom Sarret," the first film produced for a paying audience by an African in Africa.



King: Jordan will serve as model

(Continued from page 1)

we went to Madrid. We have recovered our land, we have recovered our rights in terms of water resources, and every single area of agreement or discussion within the context of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty has been covered satisfactorily... people are mixing, meeting, working together. This conference is a result of that in terms of the private sector and its participation. A few days ago, in memory of the passage of one year since the signing ceremony, Jordanian and Israeli pilots flew in joint formations over Israel and Jordan, and this time it wasn't for the wall of silence that sent people scurrying for cover, not looking up with hope. It was a salute to peace, that is a real peace, a peace between people.

Q: This new warmth between Jordan and the U.S., between Jordan and the West, is that bringing any specific dividends, do you think?

A: Well, I believe that Jordan has always been there in the past. There came a period of time, as you might recall, when there were certain misunderstandings, but as far as we were concerned our concern was always for the area, and we have always been proud of this friendship and relationships that now have

resumed warmth, and probably is as warm as it was in the past.

Q: Do you believe that there can be concrete moves from this conference to create a foundation on which a lasting peace can be built?

A: I believe that this certainly is the case, and speaking of peace and enthusiasm for it, whether it is a King's peace or a peoples peace, I think the amount of effort put into this conference by all Jordanians, by the private sector, by Jordanians everywhere, is an example of what peace means to them and what hopes they have for the future. I think that the results of the conference will come out very soon in terms of agreements, specifically reached during this period of time, and also in paving the way for much more in the future.

Q: I am just going to quote you for a minute. You described the race for peace, for the peace process as still a race between those who believe in life and stability and the prisoners of the past with all its horrors. What is the danger of that past still holding the peace process hostage?

A: This is what we are betting against. I think we have the upper hand because we have the majority of people with us, and in any event making it

a peace between people is the answer, removing the fears they have of each other or have had over a long period of time, seeing the human face of the other side in each case has created so far a very healthy atmosphere which we hope will continue. The danger is there. There will be those who try to torpedo this. But my effort, in particular, to make it a warm peace, to get people to get together, is really the way and the answer, I believe. It shall never be peace between governments or a King's peace or anything similar. It should be a peace between people, and this is where we are moving and what we have achieved. A: Many believe there can be peace without prosperity. How long do you think it will be before you see some sort of concrete peace dividend? Will people see that there lives have improved in order to strengthen this peace? A: We need time. Obviously, with agreements reached today some implementation will begin immediately. Some areas will require feasibility studies and so on. But the cooperation, not only within the context of Jordan, but also between Jordan and its neighbours, and in this case even Israel in particular... will bring about some results soon, and we are optimistic, hopeful and determined.

Arafat: International community has a moral and political responsibility to help Palestinians

FOLLOWING is the text of an interview that Daphne Barak, a journalist with Fox Television, had with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat last month when he was in New York attending the United Nations 50th anniversary celebrations.

QUESTION: Mr. Arafat, you are in uniform, and I was wondering why? Is the revolution still on? Are you more comfortable with it?

ANSWER: No, I am not only the president of the Palestinian National Authority, I am still the commander-in-chief of the Palestinian army.

Q: So, when are you going to feel you don't need to wear the uniform?

A: Until I am not the commander-in-chief.

Q: Many people know you but actually don't know you. For example, the last time I interviewed you, in Paris, it was 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning. I know that you are awake until 4, 5, 6 o'clock in the morning. And most of your people function at these hours, too. Why do you have this lifestyle?

A: It became a part of my life since early. I am a hard worker from the beginning of my life. As an example, I'll tell you something. When I was in Kuwait, working as a civilian engineer, I had three companies — not one, three companies. Can you imagine it?

Q: Working 24 hours a day...

A: Yes. So it is a part of my life.

Q: So actually you became used to working so hard.

A: Yes. I don't know any other way to live my life.

Q: Did you try to adjust to another lifestyle, or do you just like it?

A: No. I like it. Why not? Without work, it means nothing.

Q: How many hours do you work a day?

A: Between 16 and 18 hours.

Q: And how many hours do you sleep?

A: Between 5 and 6.

Q: And that's enough for you?

A: More than enough. Sometimes I find it hard to sleep at all.

Q: You are a new father. What's the most exciting experience about it, day to day? Changing the baby?

A: Actually, I adopted, before that 28 children. They are those who have lost their fathers and their mothers, and we don't know their names. So I have given them my name. And some of them have been graduated from universities; some have been married. So I had already a big family.

Q: Still, it's a difference, right?

A: Yes. Something touching perhaps.

Q: You have a daughter. I know some of my best

friends, although they are American and Westernised, they are very disappointed to have daughters and not sons. Are you disappointed?

A: No!

Q: Do you want other children?

A: If there is an opportunity, why not?

Q: Tell me something about the baby — is she beautiful? What does she know to say?

A: She's beautiful... Yes. I think she is...

Q: Does she resemble you?

A: Yes. I prefer to have her look like her mother, as a girl. Not me... (laughs)

Q: This trip to New York is very different from your last trip. You are very welcome.

A: The first time, 21 years ago, when I came to address the United Nations...

Q: Under the different circumstances...

A: Yes. You remember I mentioned that I came carrying the olive branch of peace... and not to let the olive branch fall from my hand.

Q: But this time you are really welcome. How do you feel: do you feel you have really achieved something? I mean, Fidel Castro is not invited to all kinds of events — and you are to most of them?

A: It is something different. Still, Cuba is having problems with the siege.

Q: You met with a lot of Jewish organisations while you were here. Did they warm up to you? Did you feel they were confrontational?

A: I think it has been fruitful. For your information, it is not the first time I have met many of them. I have met a lot of them, under different circumstances, in many places, everywhere. I have many friends among Jews, and many friends now in the Israeli peace movement.

Q: I know many people ask you who is going to succeed you. And I know it is not the right question, because you say that you believe in democracy. But how long are you going to go on with this schedule — when do you want to retire?

A: Retire?! What does this mean, retire? I can't imagine that I would retire. If I retire from my position, I would have another position.

Q: How do you relax? Do you make any time to relax?

A: My relaxation is the work.

Q: You really love to work?

A: I can't imagine that there's life without work. Work is life. This is what I am

good at.

Q: When history is going to judge us — we're all going to be judged — how do you want to be described? As the Moses of the Palestinians who built them a home, or what?

A: I would like to be like Moses, but he is a prophet and I am not (laughs). I am an ordinary man. Prophets, you know, we Muslims believe that to be a real Muslim you have to be a real Jew, to be a real Christian. This is our religion. But I did bring my people home...

Q: Whenever you talk to Jews or to the Western world, we find your speeches very peaceful. But suddenly someone is bringing forth some tape that you are talking to Arabs about jihad.

A: I have heard this during this visit many times. You have to understand our terminology. There is special — special — Islamic terminology. I was addressing a speech to these fanatic groups. The first time I was in Johannesburg, and some Muslims were carrying banners against the peace process. And I told them: "Are you Muslims? You are not Muslims. Real Muslims have to believe that the grand jihad is how to face life as a human — this is the grand jihad if you are a real Muslim." And to build this society and to build states. But I was shocked when they misunderstood my using of this expression and terminology.

Q: Do you feel there is any possible real dialogue — I mean, I can talk to you and you can talk to me — do you feel there is any real dialogue between you and these fanatics? Can you really convince them? Can you really drag them with you?

A: I am doing my best. I can't say that I can make miracles. But I am doing my best.

Q: It's quite tiring to face so many problems in so many areas — Hamas on one hand, Israel on the other. Are you tired?

A: No. It is difficult, and I am passing through very difficult circumstances, and a very difficult life. But I am a strong believer — this is part of my destiny. And no one can escape from his destiny.

Q: Your destiny is very interesting, because you have escaped assassination attempts numerous times?

A: I am a strong believer. I believe in God, and this is part of my destiny.

Q: Are you scared some times?

A: Not never.

Q: You look so secure... Probably you are the most secure person here.

A: It has become a norm of life for me. Everywhere, I am



PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat addresses the U.N. special session to mark its 50th anniversary (AFP photo)

facing the same thing.

Q: What about privacy?

A: Very small space in my life for this. I am not even sure I know how to enjoy it.

Q: When you were a small child, what did you want to be?

A: I lived a very difficult boyhood. Not to forget, since I began to understand all around me, when I was living my boyhood in Jerusalem, with my uncles, we were facing the British occupation, and directly after that the tragedy of the Palestinian people. So there was no time to have something special. Who had time for dreams.

Q: To dream?

A: My belief is to have the chance for our people, for our children. To be peaceful, and remember peace...

Q: Which leads me to the last question: A Palestinian state. When are we going to have it?

A: Very soon. According to the agreement, we have signed the first stage in 1993. And now we have signed a second agreement. In between there was the Cairo agreement. And the third stage, the final stage, will start in May 1996. That is the promised date.

Q: And on this day that you have a Palestinian state, what are you personally, Yasser Arafat, going to do?

A: If they will accept me and elect me, I will continue my work.

Q: Waking up in the morning, suddenly you have a state, what is the first thing you are going to do?

A: I am sure that I will have happiness. This is my main target — for our people to live freely in their free land.

Q: But that's what you fought your whole life for. So, let's say, on this and this date, you wake up in the

morning — you made it, you have a state. What are you going to do — sing, dance, go and eat, go to sleep, go to pray?

A: Go to see the children of Palestine — how they will behave in their new independence and freedom.

Q: Do you want to add something?

A: Yes... There is a moral and political responsibility for the international community. And now the time for this international community to help the Palestinians to start again building their new structures and their new life...

Q: What did happen at the concert in Lincoln Centre the other night? I understand, that unlike other world-wide leaders, you were asked to leave... (showing him the New York Post front page: "Rudy Boots Arafat")

A: What does this mean, Rudy Boots Arafat? I don't understand it...

They came to see me in the concert. They sent me a man, saying he is the deputy of the mayor, and he said I have to leave. I told him I am not invited by you — Go to Hell, go away. Yes, I went in. It was an invitation by the United Nations. And I stayed till 5 to 10, because I had an appointment here. Who is he (Rudolph Giuliani, mayor of New York ... D.B.)? Go to hell, go to hell...

Q: Prime minister of Turkey promised to help your people. Did she so far?

A: So far we have not received all the help we need. But I am hoping. I am hoping.

Settlers squat in empty houses

(Continued from page 1)

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Tourism seen as first fruit of Amman Summit

By George Hishmeh
USIA Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The first fruit of the Amman Economic Summit — a regional tourism association — has been launched here with the hope of transforming the region into "the next global super destination," according to a fact sheet announcing the Middle East/Mediterranean Travel and Tourism Association (MEMTTA).

Key parties in the Middle East peace process, as well as Morocco, Tunisia, Cyprus and Turkey, signed on Oct. 30 a 14-article charter at the Amman conference establishing MEMTTA. The core signatories were the Palestinian Authority, Jordan, Egypt, and Israel.

This new institution is one of three called for by the first Middle East/North Africa Economic Summit in Casablanca last November. The others are the Regional Business Council and the Middle East Development Bank.

Its charter was developed under the auspices of the Regional Economic Development Working Group (REDWG) of the multilateral Middle East peace process.

Estimates are that this region's gross output in travel and tourism will reach \$78,800 million this year and is expected to increase at over four times the world average rate in the next 10-15 years to more than \$332,000

million, according to a just-released brochure published by MEMTTA with the support of the American Express company.

According to the brochure, the tourism industry, which some see as "the biggest beneficiary of peace," is also expected to generate an estimated \$19,000 million of investments in infrastructure, plant and capital equipment, representing 8.7 per cent of total capital investment in the region. This means "enormous opportunities" for investments in hotels, transport, entertainment and the restaurant business.

State Department senior attorney/adviser David Abramowitz, who represented the United States at the meetings held here, said the United States would be providing technical assistance to help create the organization and its U.S. chapter. The organization will have both regional and extra-regional divisions.

MEMTTA is a new kind of public-private partnership in that it unites governments and the private sector in a common effort to facilitate visits across borders for business and pleasure. The governments constitute MEMTTA's policy making body while the private sector manages the organization's activities.

A key principle of MEMTTA, according to the charter, is the recognition of the im-

portance of achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East and of supporting the peace process. Another is the recognition that travel and tourism will play an important role in deepening cooperation and mutual understanding in the region.

Its objective is to facilitate regional cooperation among the signatories in order to promote and market the region as a tourism destination.

The organization, which will be financed through membership subscriptions and annual dues, will primarily seek to harmonize laws, regulations and standards affecting tourism. It will also provide education and training; establish a data bank on travel trends; and carry out destination marketing activities, primarily to encourage transactions through computerized reservation systems.

Membership in MEMTTA is now open to all countries in the Middle East, Eastern Mediterranean, North Africa and the Gulf states. Tourism ministries of the founding nations can be contacted for those interested in membership.

No place is the potential of tourism more evident than in Jordan, and especially in Amman, where travellers are struck by the growing number of hotels and furnished

apartments.

According to published figures from the Jordanian Ministry of Tourism, arrivals during the first six months of this year have increased by 40 per cent over the same period last year. North American tourists recorded the biggest increase, from 27,338 to 49,719, an 81 per cent jump. European tourists here increased by 57 per cent.

Earnings from tourism in Jordan amounted to 10 per cent of the gross domestic product in 1994 and are expected to increase with the influx of visitors interested in making other stops in the region. The number of hotel rooms will reportedly reach 10,000 by the end of 1996, an increase from 6,900 at present.

Petra, the Nabatean city carved out of rose red sandstone, will have six new hotels, more than doubling its room from the present 840. In Amman, eight three-star hotels are

under construction and four five-star hotels — a Hyatt, Holiday Inn, a Sheraton and Hilton — are under construction. They will greatly increase the city's 100 five-star hotel rooms.

Other tourism projects abound in Aqaba, the Dead Sea area and the joint Israeli-Jordanian development of the "lowest park on earth" along the southern shores of the Dead Sea.

Baghdad punters try to beat the odds at stock exchange

BAGHDAD (R) — Like punters at a race track, hundreds of Iraqis spend Saturday and Tuesday morning down at the stock exchange, studying form and passing written orders to their brokers by holding them against the glass partition.

The scene is a surprise, given the stagnation of the economy and the widespread belief among ordinary Iraqis that the stock exchange is deserted.

The volume of trade may be peanuts by international standards, at about 100 million dinars (\$40,000) a session, but for Iraqis impoverished by sanctions it is one of the few legal outlets for speculative investment.

Prices have fallen behind hyperinflation, now running at almost 400 per cent a year, but the return is certainly better than at the banks, which offers 20 per cent on deposits.

Brokers say shareholders willing to wait could also reap a small fortune when the United Nations calls off sanctions and business activity recovers to pre-war levels.

"Prices are very cheap. Take the Basra Sheraton, for example, its shares now have a market price of about 840 million dinars (\$340,000) but the hotel is worth many millions of dollars," said one broker, who declined to be named.

"In some cases, you can buy these companies at a tiny fraction of the value of their real assets," said another.

"People who had dollars are buying these shares for next to nothing and one day they'll make a packet," he added.

Some industrial companies may even have benefitted from the sanctions, which have eliminated the competition from imports, and these

are the shares most in demand on the market.

All 76 companies listed on the exchange have regularly reported profits, despite chronic problems finding raw materials and spare parts for machinery.

"We have a rule that once a company makes a loss, it loses its listing. That hasn't happened to a single company since the exchange opened in 1992," said Sabih Al Dulaimi, general manager of the exchange and former head of a state bank.

"There's a lot of liquidity around so that's why there's such demand for shares, as you can see," he added, nodding towards the crowds pressing at the window of the trading ring.

Taha Ahmad of the exchange's research department said what interested investors most was not the cash dividends, which are insignificant, but the distribution of profits through free share issues to increase capital and keep up with inflation.

The free-market value of the Iraqi dinar against the dollar also weighs on the market. When the dollar rate goes up, the demand for shares goes down, Mr. Ahmad said.

The investors, many of them middle-class Iraqis who have seen inflation rapidly erode the value of their life savings, said they had mixed feelings about the market.

On Tuesday morning this week, Ali Ahmad was trying to liquidate his holdings, worth about 250,000 dinars (\$100), in the belief that he could make more money elsewhere.

"Share prices just don't keep up with inflation so I'm

going into the foodstuffs trade," he told Reuters.

But Zohair Ali Kadhim, with a portfolio worth five million dinars (\$2,000), said shares he bought at 0.25 dinars in 1993 were now worth 18 dinars so he planned to keep playing the market. Over the same period, food prices have risen about 20 times over.

"If the political situation settled down, prices would go up. I just hope the future will be good," he said.

Noel Gewargis Anton said he came every session, shuffling a portfolio with shares in about 18 companies. "Today I'm buying shares in the Iraqi Seed Production Company. They're very low and I'll sell them when they go up," he said.

The exchange does not produce an index but a random selection of shares showed that prices had risen between four and eight fold since the end of 1993. Data on free share issues for these companies were not readily available.

The investors dismissed investing in real estate because at least in the capital there are bureaucratic restraints. The government, anxious to reduce the population pressure on the capital, has banned property sales to people not registered in Baghdad in the 1957 census.

For the moment, only Iraqis can buy the shares but Mr. Dulaimi said that could change when the United Nations lift sanctions.

"For that, we depend on the policy of the state... and as President Saddam Hussein said in his speech last week, the state is committed to promoting the private sector."

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1995

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You can handle that practical very well at this time, so get right at it, and it will soon be behind you for another time.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Don't permit a determined person to dissuade you from a course of action which you believe in. Show that you have gumption.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Forget worries and be out in the busy world of activity and make the contacts which you like and get good results for you to be successful.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Get busy on property affairs and repairs today, especially since this is not a good day for pleasure or there could be problems.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Home conditions are not to your liking, so get out and be with persons you like, and be happy. Don't be fearful about gaining your aims.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Use tact where communications are concerned and confer with others courteously, then you get good results for you to be successful.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Postpone handling financial and other practical affairs which could give you many problems at this time. Be with good friends.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You feel stalemated in several interests today, so place your energies in different channels. Be careful about suggestions for a good friend.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Forget that secret concern and get into activities which are profitable and pleasant to handle for you to be very successful and content.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Avoid that friend who feels put upon and save yourself some complications. Handle business affairs wisely today and you will be successful.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Avoid the public today since others would try to downgrade you in some way, keep close to a partner who understands you.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Don't jump into new interests which you know little about today, or you could get seriously burned. Stay within your budget.

Birthstone of November: Tiger's Eye

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1995

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Plan that trip to uncover whatever it is which puzzles you. Listen carefully and follow the best of these and you will get ahead.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Your hunches are good where finances are concerned today so follow them. Reach your goals with ease so that you can meet your desires.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Pursue that individual that morning who can assist you to commercialise on your talents. In the evening tonight, confide in your family.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Get right at career activities early this morning and you can accomplish a great deal today. Come to a better understanding with fellow associates.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Make the appointments with congenial friends for the amusements you want to enjoy later today. Make real progress with your talent.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Get the key at hand today before you make certain improvements at home today which you have in mind for you to enjoy yourself with loved ones.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Although you like to weigh and balance everything before proceeding with a new project, it is better to carry through quickly today.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Plan just now to profit the most and put such a plan today, however intricate, to work quickly. Listen carefully to what you hear.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You can hit the mark today in whatever is most important to you and can be very articulate in discussions with individuals in charge.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Either be with an advisor or by yourself and plan the future very carefully at this time. Later, tonight be with the one you love for a pleasurable evening.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is a good day to be your gregarious self and see as many good friends and acquaintances as you can for a good time at this time.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is a good day to see influential persons and gain their support for new projects at this time. Obey every rule and regulation which applies to you.

Birthstone of November: Topaz — Tiger's Eye

Cloud over Canada's economy lifts after Quebec vote

OTTAWA (R) — Canada's economy got an immediate boost from the defeat of separatists in Quebec's referendum as a cloud of uncertainty lifted and interest rates began to fall, economists said Tuesday.

"From here on Canada starts to get some of the payoff," said Scotiabank Inc. chief economist Michael Manfred.

Canadians have held a tight clamp on their wallets in recent months, partly because of fear that the independence referendum would disrupt the national economy.

Although Canadian unity forces won Monday's vote only by a tiny 50.6 per cent majority, it was enough to rally anxious financial markets.

The Canadian dollar rose sharply and both long

term interest rates tumbled. Economists said the vote against separation meant lower interest rates, which could spur economic growth.

"I am still optimistic that short-term interest rates can go below those in the United States, which I think gives a much needed shot in the arm to the domestic economy," said Citibank economist Andrew Spence.

Canada's key three-month interest rate was still trading on Tuesday at 1.5 percentage points above the equivalent U.S. rate.

Moreover, growth that had stumbled badly at the beginning of the year has started to recover. Economists say the trend will continue and be given a boost by the lower rates.

"Growth is picking up. The U.S. economy has snapped back and that will pull us

along. Interest rates have come down," said Royal Bank of Canada economist John Johnston.

"We think that Canadian growth will accelerate to around three per cent later this year, and hold there in 1996, with low inflation," he said.

In the second quarter of 1995, the gross domestic product (GDP) fell by 1.0 per cent and there were fears that the economy could slip into recession. This followed a boom year in 1994 when the Canadian economy grew faster than any other G7 country at 4.6 per cent.

Canada's economy is highly dependent on exports to the United States and better growth there will help exporters.

"We are seeing the U.S.

economy come back. We have seen the exports come back. We think we will have very strong export growth over the next 12 months. We will have good capital spending growth," said Scotiabank economist Michael Manfred.



"I wrote to my parents to borrow money...but I can't mail it until your parents loan us a stamp."

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles. One letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

USED
VORLE
YIFNER
LEFTLI

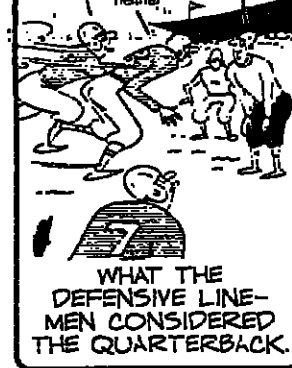
Print answer here: _____

Yesterday's Jumbles: SOAPY MUSIC BASKET GENTLE

Answer: The beauty student needed this when she missed the exam — A MAKE UP TEST

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

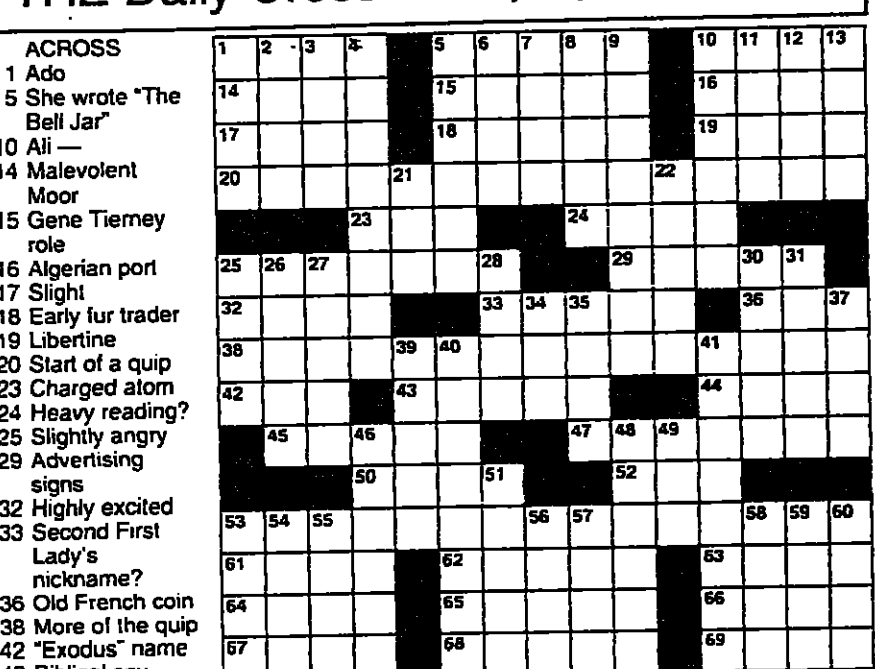
by Henri Arnold and Mike Argilston



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon

(Answers tomorrow)

THE Daily Crossword by Betty Jorgensen



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ACROSS
1 Ado
5 She wrote "The Bell Jar"
10 Ali —
14 Malevolent Moor
15 Gene Tierney role
16 Algerian port
17 Slight
18 Early fur trader
19 Libertine
20 Start of a quip
23 Charged atom
24 Heavy reading?
25 Slightly angry signs
32 Highly excited
33 Second First Lady's nickname?
36 Old French coin
38 More of the quip
42 "Exodus" name
43 Biblical spy
44 Penpoints
45 Up and about
47 Endangered receptacle?
50 Tense
52 Rowing need
53 End of the quip
61 Formerly, once
62 Put on
63 Put away for later
64 Funny Jay
65 Seamstress
66 Pare
67 Kind of shark
68 Double curves
69 Alone

DOWN
1 Boxer's weapon
2 French composer
3 Chills and fever
4 Oatmeal dish, in England
5 Flat areas
6 Girl
7 Writer: abbr.
8 Speckled or rainbow
9 Concordant
10 Brunel's land
11 Sled
12 City on the Caspian
13 Dill, old style
21 "Vive le —"
22 Muslim prince
25 — Han
26 Athenian assembly area
27 A Day
28 Passageway
30 More modern
31 Diving device
34 Ta-ta
35 CEO's deg.?
37 — daisy
39 Amino and acetic
40 Charity
41 Gives over for care
46 German
48 Suzanne of TV
49 General Arnold
51 Cassie of TV
53 Holler
54 Sandwich cookie
55 Annapolis inst.
56 Bird sounds
57 Molding
58 Poi source
59 Satanic
60 San —, lt.

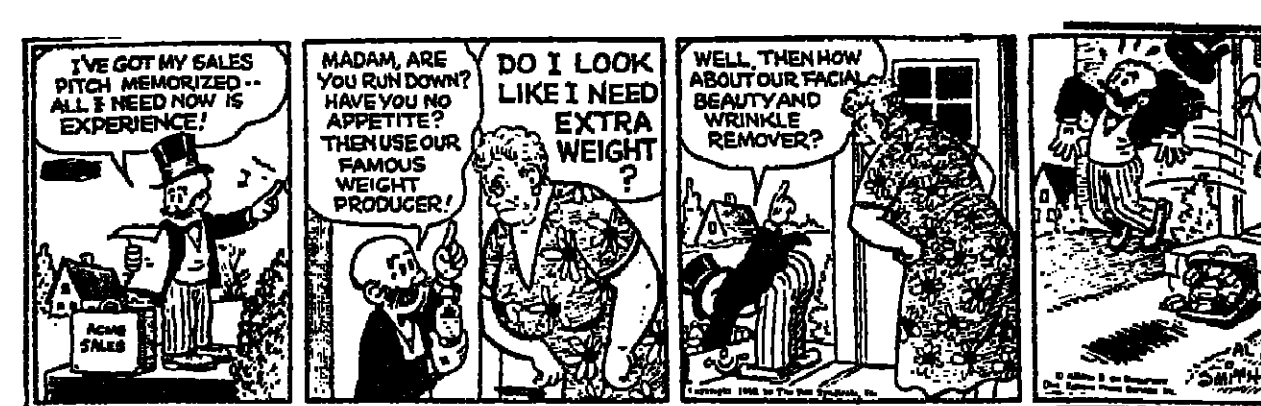
Peanuts



Andy Cap



Mutt'n'Jeff



Jordanian investors give territories a boost

By Lamia Laboud

A GROUP of Palestinian and Arab investors in Ramallah elected a board of directors for the Islamic bank in Gaza and the territories this week.

Elected chairman of the board was the group's leader, Tawfik Fakhouri, a Palestinian businessman from Jordan.

He is the chairman of the Bank of Jordan, a commercial bank which was one of the first foreign banks to open branches in the territories and the autonomy after the Gaza-Jericho first accord.

The Islamic bank will observe, like similar banks in Arab states, the Islamic religious ruling which forbids the charging of interest on bank deposits.

Mr. Fakhouri said many religious Palestinians now de-

posit their money in commercial banks without taking the usual interest payable.

They also do not accept loans, since they would have to pay interest to the bank. There is therefore a need for Islamic banking so that observant Muslims have a service which works the religious way, he said.

"Besides," Mr. Fakhouri added, "it's good business."

In Amman, the Jordan Islamic Bank has become the second largest bank in the country with \$1.5 billion in deposits, said Yahya Kadamani, vice chairman of the new Islamic Bank and of the Bank of Jordan.

Mr. Kadamani said Mr. Fakhouri had been given Yasser Arafat's go-ahead to set up the bank several months ago, when Mr. Arafat and King Hussein met in Amman.

"So far, the Palestinian Islamic Bank has some 2,000 shareholders — mainly Palestinian businessmen from Jordan, but also some locals, along with Jordanian and Gulf investors."

The bank's starting capital is \$22 million, Mr. Kadamani said. The first branch will open in Gaza in Jan. 1, with others following in Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah and Hebron.

Mr. Fakhouri and his group of investors are also investing in an industrial park along the green line in Jenin. They have put up \$50 million and Mr. Fakhouri has bought 500 dunams (2,000 acres) in Jenin.

He promoted the project at the Amman economic conference and lobbied for international donors to start joint ventures with Palestinian investors.

Mr. Fakhouri said he had received the OK from Israeli

and the Palestinian Authority for the industrial park, and the World Bank will offer low interest loans to interested parties.

Mr. Fakhouri has several factories in Jordan, and hopes to open several in the Jenin industrial park.

They would produce aluminium, cigarettes, tiles, kitchen cabinets and sweets. The Israeli Civil Administration in the Jenin area agreed to invest NIS 30 million to finance the installation of electricity, telephone lines and sewage, Mr. Fakhouri said.

Mr. Kadamani said Jenin is a good site for an industrial park since it is a short drive from both Haifa port, which is a doorway to the European market, and from the King Hussein bridge, from which the Arab states are accessible. Palestinian businessmen

from Jordan are the biggest investors in the Palestinian private sector and have been the first to profit from the Israel-Jordan peace treaty and the autonomy agreement.

Mr. Kadamani said they have the blessing of King Hussein and Mr. Arafat to go ahead and the capital to do so.

The autonomous areas are virgin opportunities with low risk. Few local businessmen have the capital, so their compatriots from Jordan are moving into the private sector, although some are looking for joint ventures with locals.

"We promise we will invest and build a modern Palestinian state with a modern free-market economy," Mr. Kadamani said. "In a few years Gaza and the West Bank will look entirely different." — Jerusalem Post.

Arabian Steel Pipes likely to get ISO 9002 certificate

By Khatib Salhan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In their preparations to enter a competitive international market, Jordanian export-oriented companies are racing to meet quality standards put by the

International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO). In that regard, the Arabian Steel Pipes Manufacturing Company (ASPM) was recommended by the British

firm ISO Quality Assurance Register (QAR) to be awarded an ISO 9002 certificate.

According to Abdullah Abu Ghosni, the financial manager of ASPM, the company initiated its programme to win the quality standard certificate nine months ago, and upon the ISOQAR recommendation, ASPM is expected to be awarded the ISO 9002 certificate in late November this year.

ISO 9002 is one of the ISO 9000 series standards that include 9001, 9002, 9003, and 9004, which cover fundamental elements or requirements of quality management systems, each of them applicable to a specific situation of a supplier organisation, according to the complexity of the organisation, or the requirements of the purchaser, according to the introductory standard

ISO 9000 of the Geneva-based International Trade Centre (ITC) of the United Nations.

ASPM is expected to win the ISO 9002 quality certificate which deals with quality assurance in production, installation and servicing.

According to the introductory standard ISO 9000 of the ITC, "ISO 9002 standards are applicable in situations when the supplier or contractor is not responsible for design, but when confidence in product conformity can be attained by adequate demonstration of a supplier's capabilities in production, installation and servicing."

HRH Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday urged all Jordanian companies to adopt ISO 9000 standards in order "to be accredited international qualitative recognition in our export-oriented efforts" in an ever competitive international

market. Jordan is now on the verge of being accepted in the World Trade Organisation, and has introduced many laws and by-laws to meet the international body's standards, according to Trade and Industry Minister Ali Abul Ragheb.

The ITC reported that over 62 countries worldwide have adopted the ISO 9000 standards as national standards by mid-1994, and that 70,517 certificates were issued in 76 countries and territories.

According to ITC, 36 companies in the UAE, 30 in Saudi Arabia, 9 in Egypt, 2 in Oman, 1 in Qatar, 106 in Turkey, 90 in Greece, 5 in Cyprus, and 253 in Israel were awarded at least one certificate of the ISO 9000 series since the Geneva-based International Standardisation Organisation put the standards of quality in 1979.

Widening income gap sparks alarm in China

BEIJING (AFP) — The sharply widening income gap between China's urban rich and poor is sparking alarm in official circles, with many blaming exploitation of loopholes in the semi-reformed economy for the trend.

An article in the latest edition of the influential Outlook Weekly magazine quoted experts and officials as criticising many of the country's "newly rich" for obtaining their wealth through unfair or even illegal means.

China, despite maintaining a communist government, has during 15 years of reform been transformed from a centrally planned state into an economy that resembles capitalism — poorly regulated in certain key areas — more closely than socialism. Reforms have often abo-

lished old structures without immediately setting up new ones to take their place, leaving abundant opportunities for an entrepreneurial minority to "get rich quick," while robbing many in the less fortunate majority of a social welfare net.

Outlook cited State Statistical Bureau figures as showing that at least five million families, or two per cent of the national total, had annual incomes exceeding 50,000 yuan (\$6,000), while the yearly income of at least one million households exceeds one million yuan.

At the other end of the spectrum, at least five per cent of city dwellers were living below the urban poverty line of 160 yuan a month in 1994, it said, adding that the gap between rich and poor was widening.

Financial Markets in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

Currency	New York Close	Tokyo Close
Swelling Pound*	1.5485	1.5797**
Deutsche Mark	1.4076	1.4092
Swiss Franc	1.1354	1.1360**
French Franc	4.8796	4.8920**
Japanese Yen	102.00	102.45
European Currency Unit	1.3020*	1.3015**

* US Dollar in International Markets

Eurocurrency Interest Rates				
Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.62	5.64	5.62	5.62
Swelling Pound	6.43	6.43	6.50	6.50
Deutsche Mark	3.67	3.87	3.61	3.61
Swiss Franc	1.75	1.81	1.81	1.81
French Franc	6.75	6.31	6.41	5.93
Japanese Yen	0.14	0.13	0.14	0.25
European Currency Unit	5.59	5.59	5.59	5.62

Interest rates for various currencies (U.S. Dollars, Pounds, etc.)

General Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7080	0.7100
Swelling Pound	1.1177	1.1233
Deutsche Mark	0.5021	0.5046
Swiss Franc	0.6229	0.6260
French Franc	0.1448	0.1455
Japanese Yen	0.6910	0.6945
British Guilder	0.4414	0.4506
Swedish Krona	0.0644	0.0646
Italian Lira	0.0644	0.0646
Belgian Franc	0.0644	0.0646

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Lebanese Lira	0.043455	0.043575
Saudi Riyal	0.1685	0.1694
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3070	2.3470
Qatari Riyal	0.1932	0.1945
Egyptian Pound	0.2020	0.2020
Saudi Riyal	1.6330	1.6410
Ugandan Shilling	0.1932	0.1933
Yemeni Rial	0.2885	0.3155
Yemeni Rial	1.5535	1.5975

For more information, contact the bank.

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Chang and Becker survive a fright

PARIS (AFP) — Three-times champion Boris Becker and fourth-seeded Michael Chang were both given a fright at the Paris Indoor Open on Tuesday. But Wayne Ferreira at last beat a four-year losing jinx.

Both Becker and Chang dropped the first sets of their opening matches in the \$2.25 million tournament while a nervous Ferreira edged past Richey Reneberg of the United States — his first-ever success in the tournament after falling at the first hurdle for the past four years.

Becker, who only decided to play in this tournament after a strenuous work-out to test his injured back at the weekend, survived a series of crises against Russian Alexander Volkov.

The 1986, 1989, 1992 champion, still bidding to qualify for the season-ending ATP Championship finals in Frankfurt, dropped the first set and then squandered a service break while leading 4-2 in the third before finally chalking up a 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 win in one and three-quarter hours.

"It's always tough playing in the first round of any tournament," he said after his tenth career victory in as many matches against the Russian left-hander.

"But I am pleased with the way I played," he went on, adding with a grin: "And I am hoping for great things here this week. After all — I have won this tournament three times and my victories come every third year... and my last victory was in 1992."

Becker now faces big-serving 14th seed Todd Martin of the United States for a place in the quarter-finals. Martin earlier proved far too powerful for plucky Dutch qualifier Henk Jan Davids and he cruised home to a comfortable 6-3, 6-4 win.

Chang, who unlike Becker is already assured of his place at the ATP finals, was given a tougher-than-expected work-out by Zimbabwe's Byron Black.

The 23-year-old Chinese-American, twice a semi-finalist, came under early pressure and dropped the first set against determined Byron. Black of Zimbabwe. But Chang's much-improved service, once considered the weakest part of his game,



Michael Chang

came to his rescue. He hit 14 aces, many on crucial points, in a 4-6, 6-3, 6-3 victory.

"It's nice to be able to throw in some big serves — but you can't take anything away from Byron," said Chang after his win. "He won that first set."

PARIS OPEN

Referring to the tremendous support he always receives from the Chinese community in the French capital, Chang said: "It's tremendous. I always like playing in Paris. It brings back happy memories of when I won the French title at Roland Garros."

Chang, winner of four events this season was clearly unsettled by Black's early speed and accuracy.

The 26-year-old Zimbabwean, although better known as a doubles player, has been enjoying a remarkable singles

season this year rising to 35th in the rankings and reaching the quarter-finals at the United States Open.

Chang, the 1989 French Open champion, now plays either thirteenth-seed Andrei Medvedev of the Ukraine or last weekend's Essen finalist MaliVai Washington of the United States.

Washington went the distance on one of the adjoining courts before scoring a 4-6, 6-4, 6-2 in his first-round showdown with Todd Woodbridge of Australia.

Ninth-seeded Ferreira finally overcame his losing streak — although at times he looked as though he was about to fall at the first hurdle for the fifth time in a row.

The 24-year-old Ferreira, winner at both Ostrava and Lyon earlier this month, dropped the second set despite holding a match point at 6-2, 5-4.

But when he had overcome the initial frustration of seeing Reneberg get back on

level terms at one set all, he settled down and finished strongly for a 6-2, 5-7, 6-4 win.

For a player who spends most of his spare time in the French capital where he has bought an apartment, the victory was particularly sweet and Ferreira remained confident that now that he has beaten the jinx — he will win again.

In the next round he faces either eighth-seeded Spaniard Sergi Bruguera or Henri Leconte of France.

Left-handed veteran Guy Forget triumphed in the all-French confrontation with promising newcomer Jerome Golmard — winning in three sets although he was helped when his opponent sustained a groin injury midway through the match.

Another Frenchman, Cedric Pioline, a former United States Open finalist who has never won a tournament, outplayed Sweden's Magnus Gustafsson. Gustafsson, who was playing under a pro-

tested ranking after a long lay-off because of a serious shoulder injury, took a 2-0 lead but then faded.

Jan Siemerink, the 16th seeded Dutch player, won a dramatic outside court confrontation with American David Wheaton 7-6 (8-6), 7-6 (7-4) to reach the third round while his compatriot Jacco Eltingh snatched a thrilling first-round 6-4, 3-6, 7-6, (7-2) victory over Brett Steven of New Zealand.

The victory put Eltingh into a second-round match against sixth-seed Jim Courier on Wednesday.

Frenchman Arnaud Boetsch, who has climbed in the top-20 rankings after his victory in Toulouse and semi-final berth in Essen, earned a crack at top-seed Pete Sampras when he defeated Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden 6-2, 7-6 (7-3).

Meanwhile, another home player, Guillaume Raoux, beat Uzbekistan qualifier Oleg Ogorodov 6-4, 6-3.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Egyptian community club hosts chess tourney

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Egyptian Community club is currently hosting the 2nd Pharaoh's Chess Tournament in cooperation with the Royal Chess Federation (RCF). On the opening day, Talbieh Club beat Al Wihdat's team 3-1 while the RCF team beat the hosts 2.5/1.5.

Row over sacked coach continues

ACCRA (AFP) — Ivorian coach Boubakar Ouattara has refused to return as coach of Ghana's Ashanti Kotoko and has accused the team's management of forging a letter to the International Football Federation (FIFA). Ouattara, whose three-year contract was terminated in May, told Sports World he had not written the letter which Ashanti claimed he had sent saying he had reached an agreement with the club. FIFA had threatened Ashanti with demotion unless they paid the \$6,300 Ouattara claimed he was owed. FIFA were, in any case, suspicious of the letter because it was written in English whereas all previous correspondence from the coach had been in French. Ouattara told the paper. Although the debt had now been settled, Ouattara said he would not go back until a proper management was installed. The team is currently being coached by former captain Kwasi Appiah.

Torre may be hired as Yankee manager

NEW YORK (AP) — Joe Torre may be the only candidate to become manager of the New York Yankees and could be hired within days, the New York Times reported Tuesday. The newspaper, citing an unidentified team executive, said Torre needs only to meet with newly appointed general manager Bob Watson. "Watson might have a candidate or two he wants to talk to, but I don't know who they could be," the executive said. "Torre is the guy. It should happen in a day or two." Watson is still attending the details of his departure last week as general manager of the Houston Astros. Other names mentioned in connection with the managing job are Yankees third base coach Willie Randolph, St. Louis hitting instructor Chris Chambliss and former Detroit manager Sparky Anderson.

Arsenal admit Ince rejection

LONDON (AFP) — Arsenal admitted on Tuesday that Inter Milan had rejected their advances for England midfielder Paul Ince. A formal statement was issued from Highbury by managing director Ken Friar following reports that the Gunners were on the brink of completing a 6.5 million pound deal with the Italian club. "Arsenal can confirm that we have been in discussions with Inter Milan regarding Paul Ince but have been advised by Inter that they are not prepared to transfer the player at this time," the statement said.

Tour of China ends 3rd stage

BEIJING (AP) — Belgium's Jo Planckaert outprinted Latvian Arvis Piziks and American Fred Rodriguez to win the third stage of the inaugural Tour of China cycling race. Planckaert completed Tuesday's 70-kilometre (43.4-mile) race, in Shanghai, in one hour, 32 minutes, 35 seconds. American Steve Hegg remained the overall race leader, three seconds ahead of Italy's Daniele Nardello. Tuesday's race was contested on a 3.5-kilometre (2.17-mile) circuit through the crowded streets of China's largest city. Planckaert notched his 13th professional victory by passing Piziks in a strong headwind with 50 metres (165 feet) remaining.

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Ardiles sacked again

MEXICO CITY (R) — Argentine coach Osvaldo Ardiles was sacked by Mexican first division side Guadalajara on Tuesday, exactly a year to the day after being sacked by English Premier League club Tottenham.

Ardiles, who was dismissed by Tottenham on October 31 last year, will be replaced by former Dutch World Cup coach Leo Beenhakker, a spokesman for the Guadalajara club said on Tuesday. "Both we and Ardiles were aware that our aim was to have an attacking team that was exciting to watch and won points," said club president Salvador Martinez, referring to the team's disappointing results.

"As this was not happening, we had a chat and decided it was best that he leave."

Ardiles admitted that he was to blame for the results but also criticised the players. He was in charge for only 10 matches.

"There were certain attitudes in this team which I really couldn't understand and which seemed unprofessional, such as wanting to start training at ten in the morning or faking injuries because they didn't want to play," he said.

Guadalajara, who traditionally use only Mexican players in a competition where up to five foreigners can be fielded by a team, are bottom of their five team group with just two wins in ten matches. They had lost their last two games.

Beenhakker, who coached the Netherlands in the 1990 world cup, will return to Mexican soccer less than a year after being sacked by America in mysterious circumstances.

America had dazzled fans with a campaign in which they scored 78 goals when Beenhakker, who has also coached Dutch club Ajax, Spanish Giants Real Madrid and the Saudi Arabian national team during his travels, who told to leave.

America subsequently faltered and were knocked out in the semi-finals but eventual runners-up Cruz Azul.

The Dutchman's most recent coaching job was with Turkish first division side Istanbulspor.

Toyota summoned by FIA

PARIS (AP) — The Toyota team has been summoned to meet Friday with FIA officials to explain the illegal turbochargers found on two of their cars in last week's Catalunya Rally.

The two cars, driven by defending world champion Didier Auriol and Juhani Kankkunen, were disqualified when turbochargers did not conform to International Automobile Federation standards, a FIA spokesman said Tuesday.

"After examining the detailed reports, the FIA found the reasons for the cars' exclusion serious enough to summon the team to give more information," he said. He did not specify what sanctions, if any, would be brought against the two drivers.

"They are being summoned so they can explain themselves," the spokesman said. "Any sanctions will depend on how serious the charges are and their defence."

Neither Auriol nor Kankkunen are in contention for this year's World Rally Championship, to be decided between Spain's Carlos Sainz and Britain's Colin McRae in the British Rally Championship Nov. 19-22.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
A TANNAM HRSCH
Ch. Tribune Media Services, Inc.

WHO'S AT FAULT?

Both vulnerable. East deals.		10	1NT	Pass	20
NORTH		Pass	2NT	Pass	Pass
AKQ532					
OK6					
53					
884					
WEST		EAST			
AK8		AAJ10			
Q542		QJ10			
Q76		KQJ82			
AJ9753		Q10			
SOUTH		NORTH			
74		CA873			
QJ104		AK2			
The bidding:		EAST SOUTH WEST NORTH			

Opening lead: Seven of 0. The bidding and play of this hand were far from perfect. Follow what happened and then decide who erred and where. South's no-trump overall showed the equivalent of a no-trump opening bid. North faced to game with three spades and passed when partner's three-no-trump rebid denied three-card support. West led a diamond, and East's king lost to the ace. A spade to the queen was allowed to hold. Declarer returned to hand with the king of

clubs and led another spade. This time East captured the king with the ace and returned a diamond. There was only one entry to dummy with which to set up and run spades, and two were necessary. Declarer could make only eight tricks.

First, let's congratulate East on fine defense. Had East won the first spade, declarer would have had no trouble fulfilling the contract. Try it if you don't believe us. The first error was North's in the bidding. With a good six-card major, North should have wanted to play four spades and nothing else, so the correct action would have been to jump to four spades.

Next, declarer made a subtle error which allowed East to play a starring role. Since South could afford to give up the lead twice more, South should have ducked a spade at trick two, forcing East to win that trick. Next a spade is led to the queen, and the suit can be established while there is still a heart entry in dummy.

Swedes could end Parma's European run

BONN (R) — Parma's remarkable run of success in Europe in the last few seasons is in serious danger of coming to an end at the hands of unglamorous Swedes Halmstad in the Cup Winners Cup second legs on Thursday.

The Italians, who won the trophy in 1993, were runners up in 1994 and triumphed in the UEFA Cup last season, need to overturn a 3-0 defeat from the first leg in Gothenburg.

Parma, who are level on points with AC Milan at the top of the Italian division, will risk all with a three-man attack of Bulgarian Hristo Stoichkov, Gianfranco Zola and Alessandro Meli.

After victories over some of Europe's most glamorous clubs in recent seasons, such as Juventus, Atletico Madrid, Ajax Amsterdam and Benfica, there would be a certain amount of irony in Parma going out to the little-known Swedes.

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Australian Open venue almost ready

MELBOURNE (AFP) — The 23-million-dollar (\$17 million U.S.) development of Flinders Park was on target for completion before next January's Australian Tennis Open, tournament director Paul McNamee said Wednesday.

The development includes two new show courts, a clay court, eight Rebound Ace hardcourts, a garden square and a function centre.

"We're going for double the action at the 1996 Australian Open," said McNamee. "We have double the com-

puter (rankings) points for players and almost double the venue size with the new development.

McNamee said he had already received entries from French Open champion Thomas Muster, Goran Iv-

nisevic, Yevgeny Kafelnikov and Wayne Ferreira for the January 15-28 Grand Slam.

McNamee said he expects all the sport's top players to be here for the Australian Open, with Andre Agassi and Mary Pierce defending their 1995 titles.

Tyson breaks thumb, fight off

LAS VEGAS (R) — Mike Tyson and his handlers concealed a broken thumb he suffered three weeks ago, hoping he could still fight Buster Mathis Jr. on Saturday, but the former heavyweight champion fractured the bone, forcing postponement of the bout.

Tyson, looking for his second victory of his comeback following three years in prison, said after the fight was officially postponed on Tuesday night that he "wasn't acting professionally" in trying to go through with the fight.

"I thought I could sneak it through. It's not my job to think as a doctor."

"My objective is to basically fight, but the pain became too intense and it continued hurting during sparring sessions," said Tyson, who reinjured the thumb on Monday.

"I believe it happened in Ohio right before I came here and then again yesterday," Tyson said.

Tyson, 28, sparred publicly on Monday and in private on Tuesday afternoon, apparently with a broken right thumb.

On Monday, the former heavyweight champion shook his hand as if it was bothering him in a two-round sparring session and said afterward that it was a little sore. He appeared to not throw as many rights as he might have, but he did land several hard right hands.

Dr. Gary Marrone, a Las Vegas orthopedic surgeon, said Tyson came to him two weeks ago and said he had injured the thumb a week earlier while sparring.

"We weren't sure whether three weeks was sufficient enough for Mike to fight," Marrone said. "But Mike wanted under any circumstances to be able to fight, to not have to cancel this. So we gave it three weeks."

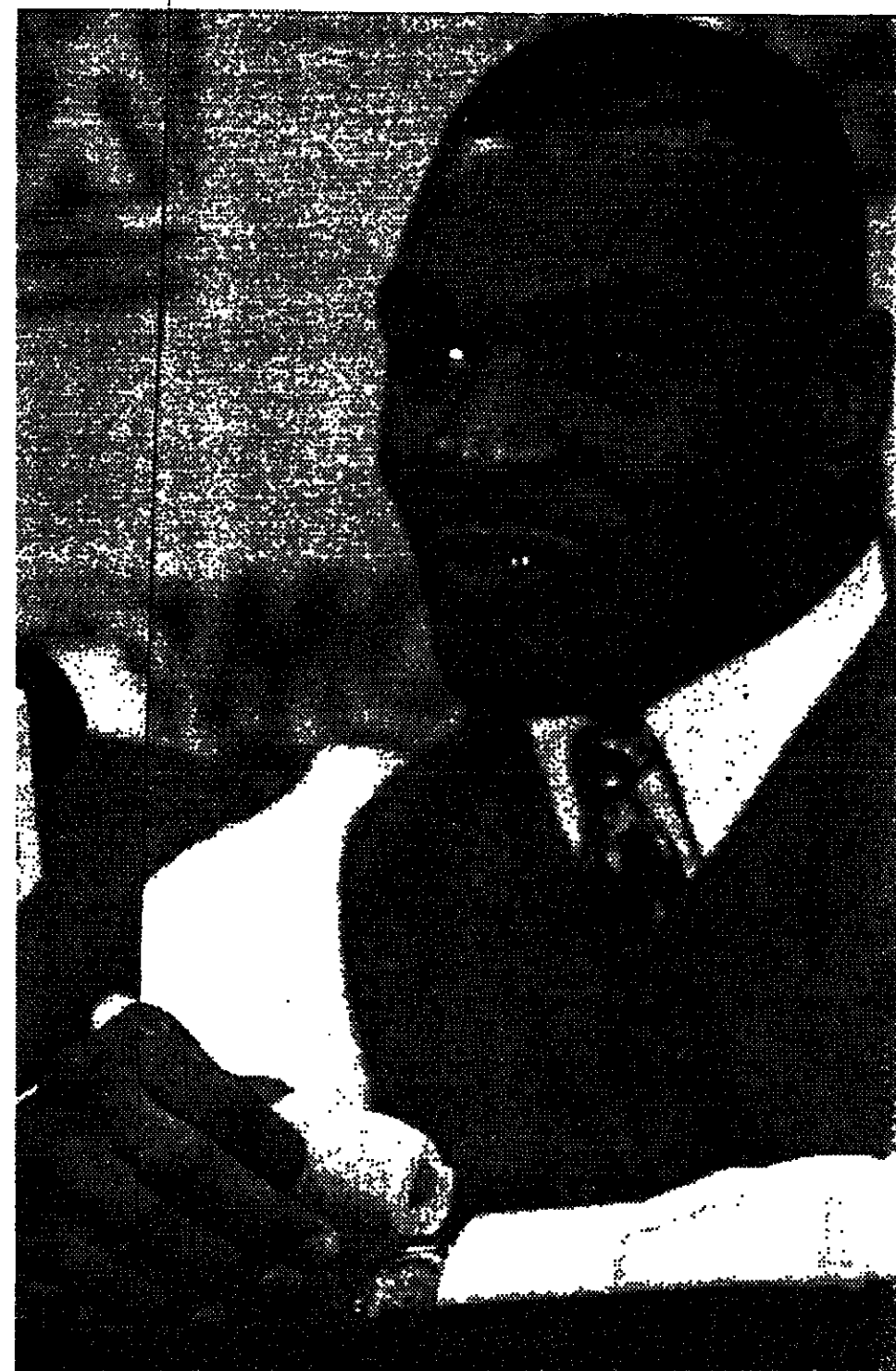
But X-rays taken late Tuesday afternoon showed that "the fracture that already started to heal had basically broken again. At this point there was no way we could medically release Mike to fight," said Marrone, describing the fracture as being between the main joint and the tip of the thumb.

"We feel that it will probably be at least another four to six weeks before we would allow him to fight again," Marrone said.

Another Tyson doctor, Gerald Higgins, said it did not appear that Tyson, who was to receive \$10 million to fight Mathis, would require surgery to correct the injury.

Michael Marley, a spokesman for promoter Don King, said the fight will be rescheduled.

Tyson's manager, John Horne, said: "Buster Mathis is under contract to fight Mike Tyson. There was no



Boxer Mike Tyson answers questions at a news conference Oct. 31 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Tyson's Nov. 4 fight against Buster Mathis was cancelled due to a broken thumb on Tyson's right hand (Reuters photo)

Russian discus thrower gets 4-year ban

MONTE CARLO (AP) — Grand Prix discus champion Dmitry Shevchenko of Russia has been banned for four years after testing positive for steroids, the International Amateur Athletic Federation said Tuesday.

Shevchenko tested positive for metandienone metabolite at the Grand Prix meet in Cologne, Germany, on Aug. 18. The analysis of the "B" sample confirmed the presence of the banned substance in the athlete's urine, the IAAF said.

Shevchenko, 27, finished eighth at the World Championships in Göteborg, Sweden, in August.

In Cologne, the Russian defeated world champion Lars Riedel with a throw of 68.04 metres (223 feet-3 inches). He also beat Riedel in September's Grand Prix final in Monaco with a throw of 67.94 metres (222 feet-11 inches).

The IAAF said Shevchenko has been stripped of his title and Riedel will be recognised as the 1995 Grand Prix champion.

Lazio, Liverpool suffer shock exits

PARIS (AFP) — Liverpool and Lazio, scorers of 10 unanswered goals at the weekend, were cut down to size in suffering shock UEFA Cup second round exits on Tuesday to Brondby of Denmark and French side Lyon.

Lyon were joined in the third round by countrymen Bordeaux. They achieved what Manchester United had failed to do in the previous round, beating Russians Rotor Volgograd.

However, Nottingham Forest extended English sides' 17-year-old winning streak against French opponents in the three European cups, beating Auxerre 1-0 on aggregate.

Liverpool were undone by a late goal from the Danish side, an invaluable away counter, that required the high-flying Premiership club to score twice. Norwegian defender Dan Eggen rose to head home from a corner in the 78th minute.

Coach Roy Evans said: "Obviously we are bitterly disappointed but we weren't at our sharpest and we paid for it."

Lyon, only in the middle of the French First Division this season, shocked Lazio beating them 4-1 on aggregate, 2-0 on the night.

Eccentric coach Guy Stephan, who replaced former French international Jean Tigana in the summer, said: "We were magnificent. We worked really hard and really effectively, we deserved this result. I am so happy for the players."

The Rome side, 4-0 winners over Juventus on Sunday, conceded a 21st minute goal and missed a penalty within a minute of that to compound their misery.

Lyon playmaker Ludovic Giuly played a superb ball over the Lazio defence and 21-year-old striker Florian Maurice ran onto it to strike the ball past Fernando Orsi.

Lazio were offered an immediate chance to redress the balance. Lyon midfielder Christophe Devaux conceded a penalty, which

Italian international striker Giuseppe Signori sidefooted wide, with the keeper Pascal Olmeta sent the wrong way.

Striker Eric Assadourian made it 2-0 in the 57th minute, although farcical Lazio defending contributed to it.

The outstanding Giuly made a darting run into the box, evaded Di Matteo's wild lunge and threaded the ball across the goal line. The ball evaded Orsi but defender Alessandro Nesta should have cleared, only to hack wildly at the ball, and Assadourian slid in at the far post to put it away to seal an extraordinary victory.

Bordeaux's hero against the stylish Russian side Rotor Volgograd was Antoine Bancel, acting as the lone striker. In the 83rd minute he seized on a long ball from midfielder Daniel Dutuel, beat three defenders, clipping the ball into the net from the edge of the area.

"It was just reward for the team who qualified through the much maligned Inter-Cup summer tournament."

Swiss side Lugano, who beat Inter Milan in the first round, campaign was ended with a 3-1 loss on aggregate to Czech side Slavia Prague.

Portuguese giants Benfica almost went the same way as Liverpool and Lazio. With three minutes to go they trailed Dutch side Roda JC Kerkrade 2-1 on aggregate. However, in an astonishing finale, their Moroccan international striker Hassan scored twice to break Dutch hearts, Benfica winning 3-2 on aggregate.

British representation was reduced to just Forest as both Leeds United and Scotland's Raith Rovers were eliminated. The sad fact is that since English clubs returned to European competition only Norwich, Liverpool and now Forest have reached the third round.

Forest failed to score against Auxerre, but thanks to Steve Stone's lone goal in the first leg in France it was enough.

Seles withdraws with ailing knee

OAKLAND (R) — Monica Seles, who was scheduled to return to the WTA Tour at the Bank of the West Classic this week, withdrew from the Oakland Tournament on Tuesday when a knee injury flared up.

Seles has been plagued by tendinitis in her left knee, since her return to professional tennis this summer and the problem became more serious while she was practicing on the indoor carpet for this week's tournament.

"I came here early to practice, hoping that a few days practice would get my knee used to this surface," Seles told reporters in a telephone news conference on Tuesday. "Unfortunately, it made the problem worse," added Seles, who was expected to

play her first match since losing the U.S. Open final to Steffi Graf last month on either Wednesday or Thursday.

Seles, ranked co-number one with Graf since returning to tennis after nearly two and a half years away because of her infamous stabbing in Hamburg in 1993, is next scheduled to play at the season-ending WTA Championship in New York.

Meanwhile, the withdrawal of top seed Seles has opened the door for American Zina Garrison-Jackson and sixth seed Irina Spilica of Romania, who each won first-round matches.

Crafty veteran Garrison served and volleyed her way to a 6-3 3-6 6-3 victory over Venezuela's Maria Vento.

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REMEMBRANCE: Brother Alan and Alex Tongol light a candle in a bamboo stick above the tomb of their mother in the submerged San Matias cemetery in Santo Tomas, te Philippines, as Filipinos observe the All Saints Day. It took the brothers about half an hour to search in the water to locate the tomb. Cemeteries near Mount Pinatubo disappeared under mudflows and floodwaters unleashed by torrential rains (AFP photo)

4 killed in Lebanon flare-up; 5 Israelis injured

MARJAYOUN (Agencies) — Three pro-Israeli militiamen and a Hizbollah fighter were killed in heavy fighting in Israel's self-declared security zone in South Lebanon on Wednesday, officials said.

Five Israeli troops and two militiamen were also wounded in attacks by the Hizbollah group, on the day Islamic Jihad leader Fathi Shaqaki was buried in Damascus after his assassination by suspected Israeli agents (see page one).

Hizbollah said the attacks were dedicated to the "martyr" Shaqaki.

The group, which was closely allied to Shaqaki, attacked two positions held by the South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia around dawn, killing two militiamen and wounding three others, the SLA said. One of them later

died of his injuries.

A Hizbollah fighter was killed and three others were wounded in the fighting at one of the posts, Bisri, near Jezzine in the east of the 1,000-square-kilometre zone, hospital officials in Sidon said.

Hizbollah wounded four Israeli soldiers in a bomb attack on a patrol two hours later at Braichit on the edge of the security zone, the SLA added.

An Israeli military spokesman said two of the soldiers were in serious condition and the other two only lightly hurt. They had been evacuated to hospital in Israel.

The Israelis struck back by dispatching four fighter-bombers which fired eight missiles at Hizbollah positions in Louaizeh in the Iqlim

at Toufah heights southeast of Sidon, police said. There were no casualties, they added.

Israeli artillery gunners fired almost 200 shells at Hizbollah strongholds, including four villages, police said. The guerrillas retaliated with dozens of mortar rounds, wounding fifth Israeli soldier, according to the SLA.

In Beirut Hizbollah said in a statement its fighters raided Bisri post and planted a Hizbollah flag there. The attack inflicted several casualties among the SLA. Hizbollah added.

Later, the SLA sources said guerrillas rained down shells on a SLA post at Braichit and fired mortar bombs at joint Israeli-SLA outpost at Ribane and two other nearby positions for the

Israeli-allied militia.

The guerrillas also set off two roadside bombs near an SLA armoured patrol at Beit Yahoun, on the edge of the western flank of the Israeli-held border zone but no one was hurt.

Hizbollah guerrillas, stepping up their attacks as Israel's peace talks with Lebanon and Syria languish, killed nine Israeli soldiers in two attacks last month, raising the year's total to 22 — one more than in all of 1994.

Israel wants Syria, which has 35,000 troops in Lebanon, to rein in the guerrillas. Damascus says the guerrillas have every right to resist foreign occupation.

Some 1,000 Israeli troops and 3,500 allied SLA militia hold the zone.

NATO candidates seek Washington's approval

THE HAGUE (AFP) — The two-horse race for NATO's top post entered the home straight Wednesday when the leading candidates both flew to Washington for what could prove decisive talks with U.S. officials.

Former Netherlands Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers, who seems to be the leading candidate to become the next NATO chief although he has yet to officially declare, left for the U.S., a Dutch foreign ministry spokesman said.

Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen said Wednesday that Denmark was continuing to back Uffe Ellemann-Jensen's candidacy for the post, vacated by Willy Claes last month over corruption allegations.

But he added to journalists: "Denmark will not raise an obstacle if another candidate... got a consensus within the alliance."

Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, a former Danish foreign minister, was leaving for Washington on Wednesday afternoon, according to the Ritzau news agency in Copenhagen.

The trip — during which he is to have meetings Thursday with U.S. officials including Secretary of State Warren Christopher — fuelled belief

that Mr. Ellemann-Jensen was still being considered as a possible NATO secretary-general, despite France's objections.

"The procedure is that someone who wants to be a candidate must present himself to the United States government," Dutch foreign ministry spokesman Frank de Bruin said.

While the NATO secretary-general is chosen by European members, their U.S. partner in the Atlantic alliance has final approval.

The post of secretary-general, the alliance's top civilian job, traditionally goes to a European while the top military commanders are American.

On Tuesday, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation foreign ministers, appeared to have settled on Mr. Lubbers as their choice to replace Mr. Claes, after Germany joined Britain and France in supporting him.

However, Mr. Ellemann-Jensen received invitations to the U.S. and Canada the same day, forcing him to hurriedly cancel a press conference called to announce that he was withdrawing his candidacy.

Syria rejects Rabin's 'terrorism' accusation

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria on Wednesday rejected Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's accusation that it was a "centre of terrorism" and said Damascus did not harm anyone.

"Rabin's false accusation to Syria is not only aimed at degrading Syria's image and diverting attention from Israel's aggression, but also at directing new threats against Syria," the official daily Al Baath said.

"But Israel is making the wrong calculation this time," the paper added.

Mr. Rabin told an Israeli parliamentary committee on Tuesday that Syria was "a centre of terrorism" and that Damascus would not dictate the peace process.

An official who briefed reporters on the closed-door meeting quipped Mr. Rabin as saying he accepted his military intelligence assessments that the threat of war had not passed.

"What Rabin is trying to forget is well known to the world that Israel was established by terrorism and is based on terrorism," Al Baath said.

"Israel, its newspapers admitted yesterday, considers terrorism and assassinations as top priority for its

activities," the paper said.

The Islamic Jihad movement in Palestine, which has an office in Damascus, accused the Israeli Mossad intelligence service of assassinating its leader Fathi Shaqaki in Malta last week and vowed to take revenge.

"Syria which is defending its rights and the rights of its (Arab) Nation for security and freedom does not harm anybody and does not threaten lives of people as Israel does against Lebanon and as the Mossad does...." Al Baath said.

Another daily, Tishrin, said: "Syria is haven for all national forces and there is a big difference between legitimate resistance against occupation and terrorism."

It said Mr. Rabin was trying to "mix realities so that a terrorist becomes a hero and a national struggle, who confronts occupation and defends his lands, becomes a terrorist."

Israel, Tishrin added, "has espoused the path of terrorism, killings and massacres since its establishment."

Mr. Rabin said Syria's refusal to evict Palestinian groups, such as Islamic Jihad and Hamas, was a key obstacle to peace negotiations between the two adversaries.

Talibans pound Kabul with heavy artillery

KABUL (AP) — Rebel gunmen from the Taliban militia pounded the Afghan capital with artillery fire Wednesday, killing four people and wounding at least eight others, government officials said.

The attack came amid a new threat against the capital Kabul by a second guerrilla faction based in northern Afghanistan.

Rebel leader Rashid Dostum said his forces would converge on the capital in a coordinated attack in two weeks if a viable peace formula was not put into place.

The capital is already under siege by Taliban positioned along the southern outskirts of the city.

The Taliban on Wednesday morning launched at least seven 152 artillery rounds into central Kabul's Pol-e-Mohammad Khan district close to the Defence Ministry building and presidential palace, the government said.

"We have treated ten patients from the attack," said Jurnhuriat hospital's Dr. Siddiq, who like many Afghans uses only one name. "Two of

them died."

One of the seriously wounded victims was five-year-old boy, Dr. Siddiq said.

Another two people were killed instantly in the artillery attack, a government spokesman said.

Inside the hospital, worried relatives milled around the emergency department's entrance awaiting word on the condition of the victims.

A trail of blood dotted the floor from the waiting area into the emergency ward.

Most of the rounds landed in a park area in central Kabul, although the damages and injuries were caused when one round landed on a building.

A checkpoint guard who was on duty at the time of the attack said the barrage was launched by the Taliban, who have been trying to topple the government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

Taliban commanders, who hope to establish strict Islamic rule throughout Afghanistan, have vowed to attack military targets in Kabul as part of their latest push on the capital.

Last month, an onslaught



Burhanuddin Rabbani of Taliban snarled with within five kilometres of Kabul's southern outskirts. Their advance has since stalled, with government troops holding the rebels to their positions in the Rishkor hills around the city's southern limits. Although General Dos-

tum's forces are not allied with the Taliban, the dual attack could be fatal to the government.

Analysts have said Kabul could not hold off simultaneous attacks from both the north and south, but the government insists it will hold firm.

"We have experience of coordinated opposition attacks," said government spokesman Amrullah. "It will be hard, but it will not destroy the government."

The government controls less than a quarter of Afghanistan and is surrounded by hostile factions on all sides.

More than 25,000 people have been killed in Kabul, which has faced the brunt of Afghanistan's bitter three-year civil war.

Formerly allied guerrilla forces toppled the communist regime in Kabul in 1992, but then turned their guns on one another in a battle for ultimate control over the country.

The latest fighting comes despite repeated efforts by the United Nations to broker a ceasefire and lasting peaceful solution to the conflict.

Palestinian aid held up in U.S. Senate wrangle

WASHINGTON (R) — Authority for President Bill Clinton to provide aid to the Palestinians expired at midnight on Tuesday, victim of a dispute between his administration and right-wing Republican Senator Jesse Helms.

Because of an objection by Mr. Helms, the Senate failed to act on a bill extending a waiver of U.S. restrictions against the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) put in place before the PLO became an official player in the Middle East peace process.

Mr. Helms, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, blocked action on the renewal because of lack of progress in negotiations on his bill reorganising the State Department.

The Democratic negotiator, Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts, deplored holding a vital Middle East peace hostage to an internal dispute.

He said Democrats were prepared to negotiate again Wednesday but not while the two issues were linked.

"Our ally, Israel, doesn't deserve to have the peace process made hostage to bureaucratic decision-making

process in this country," Mr. Kerry said.

Mr. Helms' action to block the so-called Middle East Peace Facilitation Act (MEPFA) followed his refusal to approve the nominations of 18 U.S. ambassadors because of the dispute over the State Department bill.

The bill as drafted would fold three separate agencies into the State Department. It also includes a permanent extension of the MEPFA.

Republican leader Bob Dole said U.S. Middle East negotiator Dennis Ross, had called from Israel to express concern about delay in enacting the MEPFA.

Congress has already extended the MEPFA three times this year, pending enactment of permanent legislation.

The Senate's failure to do so again followed Congress's action a week ago to require the U.S. embassy in Israel to be moved to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv by May 1999, a vote that sparked Arab criticism.

Mr. Dole said Mr. Helms was within his rights to block Senate action and blamed administration "intransigence" on the State Department reorganisation bill.

Mr. Helms blamed Mr. Kerry for the impasse, saying that "he keeps moving the goalposts" in negotiations.

In Cairo, Egypt's highest Islamic authority, the grand mufti, said Wednesday that the U.S. Congress vote to move its embassy to Jerusalem proved Washington's "bias" towards the Jewish state.

Sheikh Mohammad Sayed Tantawi told state radio that last week's vote was "a bad one" in light of agreements between Israel and the PLO to discuss the final status of Jerusalem in May 1996.

"The rush to move the American embassy shows the blatant bias for Israel," the mufti said. "This bias constitutes a reversal from commitments which have been made."

Sheikh Tantawi called on Islamic countries to "work to save Jerusalem and restore justice" to maintain "the integrity of the holy places."

U.S. President Bill Clinton has promised to use a delay mechanism in the Senate vote to block the measure indefinitely, to protect the Middle East peace process.

Libya promises to settle league dues

CAIRO (AFP) — Libya has promised to pay off around \$2 million in dues owed to the Arab League within "a few days" in a bid to ease the pan-Arab body's budget crisis, a league official said Wednesday.

The official, who asked not to be named, said Libya had presented "an official memo to the league saying that it will pay the remainder of its dues for the 1995 budget within a few days."

"The official said the remaining dues amounted to around \$2 million, since Tripoli had already paid part of its \$3.32 million annual contribution."

League sources had said Monday that Libya had given a refusal to the league's general secretariat when it requested the pending dues.

Libya is the second largest debtor to the league, owing \$20.5 million from the 1995 and past budgets. Iraq tops the list of debtors, with cumulative debts of \$29.8 million.

League members have failed to pay some \$10.6 million out of 1995's \$27.6 million budget, throwing the league into a financial crunch that has left it unable to pay its employees for the rest of the year.

On top of this year's budget squeeze, the 22-member organisation is already \$107 million in arrears from members' failure to pay up past dues.

The annual budget is financed by quotas ranging from one to 14 per cent of the budget fixed for each member according to its gross domestic product.

Mohammad Al Sayed, the secretary general's financial advisor, said Wednesday the crisis had already forced the league to close offices in Ottawa, Tokyo, Brasilia, Buenos Aires, Dakar and Nairobi, and that the Athens office would be closed at the end of this year.

The crisis also forced the league in 1994 to borrow \$4.7 million from its employees pension fund.

"This crisis is not a surprise. It has built up over a number of years," Mr. Sayed told the press.

He recommended that member countries agree to take up the dues owed by five countries, which he did not name, "unable to pay their contributions due to special circumstances."

The dues from the five countries, amounting 14.5 per cent of the budget, would be "divided up among other countries provided they are convinced there are good reasons for their inability to pay," Mr. Sayed said.

He also called on nine countries which have disputed parts of their dues to "bring their reservations up" with the league at a special commission created by the secretary-general Esmat Abdul Meguid.

Rifkind seeks to revive Syria-Israel peace talks

LONDON (AP) — Expressing Britain's "unreserved support" for the Middle East peace process, Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind said he was heading for the Middle East next week to discuss how to move negotiations forward.

"Clearly there is a momentum in the peace process," he said. "I think it is in everyone's interest that that momentum is not lost."

Mr. Rifkind's six-country trip follows this week's failed attempt by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to revive stalled negotiations between Israel and Syria, the major stumbling block to an overall peace settlement.

"From past form, progress is likely to be slow. But there is I think evidence that both Syria and Israel do wish to move towards a resolution of their differences," Mr. Rifkind told a news conference late Tuesday.

"One of the issues which I will be wishing to explore is the extent to which there is scope for progress in the short-term," he said.

Mr. Rifkind said he expected to meet with Syrian President Hafez Assad, Mr. Christopher met Mr. Assad on Monday, but failed to persuade him to resume talks with Israel.

The negotiations centre on Syria's demand for a complete Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

During his week-long trip, Mr. Rifkind will visit Jordan (Nov. 5-6), Saudi Arabia (Nov. 6-7), Lebanon (Nov. 7), Syria (Nov. 7-8), Israel and the occupied territories (Nov. 8-10) and Egypt (Nov. 10-11).

"The main purpose is to indicate our unreserved support to this peace process and to those who are taking it through," Mr. Rifkind said, noting this view was endorsed across Europe.

Mr. Rifkind said that during his visit to Palestinian-controlled areas, he hopes to meet Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). He said he will also visit the Orient House, the PLO's headquarters in East Jerusalem.

Israel strongly objects to foreign dignitaries visiting the Orient House, saying it implies recognition of Palestinian claims to the city.

Mr. Rifkind said Britain does not support the U.S. Congress, which voted last week to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem.

"The international community has to be very sensitive to the fact that this is an unresolved issue," he said.

During the trip, Mr. Rifkind said he also expects to discuss Iraq.

Queen Elizabeth pleased with first scheduled flight

WELLINGTON (R) — Queen Elizabeth's first-ever commercial flight was a success, a Buckingham Palace spokesman said Wednesday. The British monarch arrived in Auckland from London Wednesday morning after a 26-hour flight with 400 holidaymakers and commercial travellers. "The flight went very well indeed. The queen was superbly looked after," a spokesman travelling with the royal party told a news conference. The queen's flight saved New Zealand taxpayers an estimated New Zealand dollars 960,000 (\$630,000) at a time when the royal family has come under fire for overspending. The first-class cabin on the Air New Zealand flight was screened off by a special security door and the cabin converted with seats removed to accommodate a dining room table and a special working area. The queen, in New Zealand to open a Commonwealth summit, had the entire first class section to herself and was screened off from the other passengers in the specially modified area.

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New York waiter gets royal slap

NEW YORK (AP) — A waiter got a royal slap in the head — from an irate Prince Rainier who didn't like the man's jokes about Monaco's monarchy. But what did the prince expect at a restaurant named Pomp, Duck and Circumstance? The prince hit waiter Tim Ward at a gala honouring his late wife, Princess Grace, the Daily News said. Ward, who performs as a loudmouthed clown at the circus-like restaurant, offered his wisecracks to a crowd that included Prince Rainier's children, Prince Albert and Princess Caroline. "Hey look at the little piggy prince, eating with his fingers," Ward shouted as he passed the royal family, the newspaper quoted witnesses as saying. He also quipped, "you're Prince Albert now, but if there were elections, would you be plumber Albert?" Prince Rainier appeared to become annoyed with the jester after a projectile landed near his dinner partner, socialite Lynn Wyatt, the news said. In keeping with the restaurant's wacky atmosphere, the royals came up with some antics of their own. The prince and Mrs. Wyatt engaged in a food fight with Prince Albert, using spoons, restaurant spokeswoman Simone Martel told the news. And Prince Rainier threw a strawberry at Ward, who turned around as the prince motioned to him. And then, His Royal Highness took a good shot at Ward's head with his open hand, said one witness. The shocked waiter reportedly left the restaurant, skipping a planned photo session with the royal family.

Baryshnikov renounces classical dance

LISBON (AFP) — Dance legend Mikhail Baryshnikov said Wednesday he would never return to classical dance, but that he would one day go back to his native Russia, which he left in 1974. Aged 47 and now aware of his physical limitations, Baryshnikov, said he had given up classical dance because it required daily training. Besides, he added: "Modern dance now appeals to me more." Baryshnikov, who is performing for the first time in Portugal, Pledged to return to Russia.

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